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THE JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL AFRICAN SOCIETY

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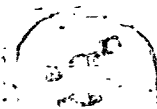
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by A. G. Hopkins

*together with a substantial book review section and
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MARY KINGSLEY: A WEST AFRICAN GROUP

DONALD SIMPSON



This photograph taken at the beginning of Mary Kingsley's second visit to Africa, is reproduced by permission of the Library of the Royal Commonwealth Society and of Mr Derek J. Holt, who gave it to the Library. It has not apparently been published since 1901, when it appeared on page 691 of *West Africa* for 1 June, described as 'A West African group (Sir Claude and Lady Macdonald and the late Miss Mary Kingsley seated)'. The accompanying text states that it is reproduced for the first time but gives no other details. The information on the mount of the photograph is not very precise but it identifies one of the five men standing behind the three seated persons already mentioned as Roger Casement.

Sir Claude Maxwell Macdonald (1852-1915) was appointed Commissioner and Consul General of the Oil Rivers Protectorate, later the Niger Coast Protectorate, in 1891. In 1892 he married Ethel, the daughter of Major W. Cairns Armstrong. In *Travels in West Africa* Mary Kingsley mentions meeting Sir Claud Macdonald at Old Calabar in 1893 and agreeing to go out with Lady Macdonald ('that very sweet and gracious lady') when she decided to join her husband at the end of 1894. They left Liverpool on

23 December and arrived at Calabar in January 1895. Apart from a short visit with the Macdonalds to Fernando Po, Mary Kingsley remained at Calabar until May. The photograph was probably taken soon after her arrival, since it includes Roger Casement. He was appointed to the Oil Rivers Protectorate on 31 July 1892, apparently as a member of the Survey Department, though in the *Colonial Office List* for 1893 (whose preface is dated February) he was described as Assistant Director General of Customs. In the two ensuing issues his title is General Service Officer and in this capacity he travelled in the Protectorate, and presented several reports on interior communications in 1894.¹ In June 1895 he was appointed Consul at Lourenco Marques while in Ireland and Reid's book indicates that he had been on leave for some time and had taken a leisurely journey home. The likelihood therefore is that he left West Africa early in the year.

Apart from the juxtaposition of two extremely interesting characters this photograph also has great interest in portraying what was presumably Mary Kingsley's travelling costume in Africa.

1. R. MacColl, *Roger Casement* (London, Hamish Hamilton, 1956), pp. 17-21. B. L. Reid, *The Lives of Roger Casement* (New Haven, Yale UP, 1976), pp. 17-21.

WHOSE DREAM WAS IT ANYWAY? TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF AFRICAN INDEPENDENCE*

MICHAEL CROWDER

WHEN THE UNION JACK was lowered at midnight and the green white and green flag of Nigeria raised in its place on October 1st 1960, there was considerable optimism in the British press about the future of that erstwhile British colony. The leaders of its three political parties were all by their own declarations committed to the practice of liberal democracy Westminster-style. The constitution that enshrined the ideals of Westminster had been patiently negotiated over a decade between the British and the leaders of the three main political parties. The former colonial masters left with the warm words of the new Prime Minister ringing in their ears: 'We are grateful to the British officers whom we have known, first as masters, and then as leaders, and finally as partners and always as friends'.¹ Many stayed on under the new Nigerian leadership, particularly those in commerce and industry, especially as Nigerians had only taken over the political infrastructure of the state from the British. The economic infrastructure remained largely intact in the hands of big British firms like UAC. The prospects for the country seemed rosy with its apparently sound agricultural base and the promise of additional foreign earnings from its proved oil reserves. An optimism about Nigeria pervaded most of the British press for the next five years. The riots that were taking place in Tivland at the very time the new flag of Nigeria was being raised were conveniently ignored by many pressmen intent on conveying an appropriate euphoria to their British readers. Indeed, the Prime Minister of the Federation, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, remarked wryly on the adulation of the world's press that 'even some of the big nations of the world are expecting us to perform miracles and solve their problems for them'.² That adulation had indeed been fairly universal but *West Africa* did note that one foreign visitor to the Independence Celebrations did not share the 'general satisfaction and optimism' and that was Mr. Sisnev, the correspondent of *Trud*, but it concluded 'even if Michael Crowder is visiting Professor at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London.

*I am grateful to Lalage Bown and Roland and Irene Brown for helpful comments on a first draft of this paper which was originally presented in the series of lectures on Africa since Independence sponsored by the Yale University African Studies Program in Spring of 1986 under the title 'Things Fall Apart?'.
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1. Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Speech made on Independence Day, 1 October 1960 in "*But always as Friends*": *Northern Nigeria and the Cameroons, 1921-1957*, (London, George Allen and Unwin, 1969), Frontispiece.

2. *West Africa* 19 November 1960.

Nigeria sounds too good to be true, the Nigerian story is one of the most remarkable and creditable in the modern world'.³ *Time* talked of Nigeria's 'impressive demonstration of democracy's workability in Africa'.⁴

Despite the many internal strains which the country experienced in its first few years of independence, including the suspension of the constitution of one of its three constituent regions and the jailing of the leader of the opposition for treason, the British press appeared to share the belief that as one Nigerian newspaper put it: 'Nigerians seem to have perfected the art of walking to the brink of disaster without falling in.'⁵ Indeed the British Prime Minister and his officials were apparently so ignorant of the real breakdown of law and order in the country that in January 1966 they flew to Lagos to attend the Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference on the Rhodesian question.⁶ A day after they flew back to London, the Prime Minister of Nigeria was assassinated and the first military regime was installed. In the twenty years that followed, Nigeria has suffered four more military coups, at least one failed coup, a three year long civil war, a brief return to an elective form of government that made a mockery of liberal democracy, and an oil boom that permitted lavish spending and corruption on a massive scale, followed by the near bankruptcy of the country, which today is economically on its knees. As a result, Nigerians of all classes have developed a deep cynicism about their leaders, both civilian and military, and certainly have little faith in the liberal democracy and mixed economy that were the legacy of their colonial rulers.

I have chosen Nigeria as an example of the disillusion that has attended the first twenty-five years of independence not only among the former colonial rulers who transferred power but also among those who inherited that power, because it contains a quarter of the population of the African continent. Its experience has unhappily not been atypical but rather the norm for the majority of African countries.

The same optimism that attended Nigeria's independence attended that of the Francophone countries, and the British territories in East, Central and Southern Africa. In each case, what was transferred was a constitution inspired by the metropolitan model. All these states committed themselves in their national anthems and the mottoes on their coats of arms to variations of freedom, justice and equality.

Of all these states only one has realised the pious hopes of those who transferred power: Botswana, which alone has suffered no *coup* or *coup manqué* and has maintained intact its liberal democratic constitution in

3. *ibid.*

4. *ibid.*

5. See Michael Crowder *The Story of Nigeria* (London, Faber, 1978), p. 259.

6. To be fair the usually well informed magazine *West Africa* raised no alarm in its columns either on the eve of the Conference nor during it, even though its own representative 'Griot' was touring the country at the time.

both spirit and practice.⁷ The story everywhere else has been the same. Majority parties voted to establish one party states which western apologists were quick to justify as reflecting true African democracy encouraging the politics of consensus where two or multi-party democracy was divisive.⁸ In reality, such moves usually proved but a cloak for the establishment of personal rule, as Jackson and Rosberg have put it.⁹ Even military regimes that intervened were seen by optimists as mere correctives for temporary aberrance in the practice of democracy by young nations. Military coups were invariably staged in the name of cleansing the state, after which the soldiers would return to the barracks. And this they did in Sudan, Ghana, the former Upper Volta and Nigeria, only to fling wide the barrack gates again as it became clear that the politicians had learnt nothing except how to abuse power more successfully. The excesses of the second Obote regime in Uganda were reputedly greater than those of Amin himself.¹⁰

Coupled with the abuse of the inherited constitutions and the acquisition of personal power through manipulation of the ballot box or the barrel of the gun has been the expropriation of the resources of the state by the few and the apparent progressive immiseration of the masses as a result. The famines that have caught the world's attention in the past few years have increasingly been laid at the doors of the politicians and military leaders rather than nature. And yet, grasping at straws, westerners refused to see their dreams shattered. Nigeria's return to democracy in 1979 was seen as a vindication by those who believed that Africans could and would adhere to the ideals of Western liberal democracy. Similar optimism attended the return to civilian rule under Obote, with the British government even helping to train the army he used to establish a worse record with Amnesty International than Amin.¹¹

But by 1985, a quarter of a century after the *annus mirabilis* of African independence, the dream had been shattered and replaced by a profound disillusion whereby Africa had become the world's basket case, a permanent *mezzogiorno* for which there was little if any hope. Ghana and Uganda, the jewels in Britain's African colonial crown had, despite their extensive educated elites, sunk in the former case into an economic slough of despond

7. See Michael Crowder 'Botswana and the Survival of Liberal Democracy in Africa' in Prosser Gifford and Wm. Roger Louis eds. *African Independence: the Origins and Consequences of the Transfer of Power in Africa* (Newhaven: Yale University Press) (forthcoming).

8. See for example James S. Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg Jr. eds. *Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1964), especially their 'Introduction'.

9. Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg *Personal Rule in Africa. Prince, Autocrat, Prophet, Tyrant.* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, University of California Press), 1982.

10. The first indications that this might be the case came to public attention as a result of the Namugongo massacre of May 1984, when both Baganda Muslims and Christians were murdered, thus giving it a genocidal character. I am grateful to Michael Twaddle for this reference.

11. See comments on the Amnesty International Report in *The Times* 28 June 1985.

and in the latter into anarchy. In the chanceries of the West, officials wished Africa would just go away and this has been reflected most dramatically in Britain, still the country with the largest investments in sub-Saharan Africa, which has reduced its support for the study of Africa to a level lower than it has been for the past twenty years.¹²

The universal wisdom has become that African independence has been an abysmal failure. Thus the conservative London *Daily Telegraph* in a recent editorial wrote that Uganda 'the one-time pearl of Africa can fairly be described as having become a symbol of everything that has gone wrong in that continent over the past 20 years or so. Since independence it has experienced violence (with hundreds of thousands killed), poverty, misgovernment on an enormous scale, and terrible suffering. Steadily the pillars of government, of law and even economic life have been destroyed...'.¹³

But is this not to judge the past twenty five years in terms of a dream manufactured in Europe not Africa, and a dream that took no cognisance either of contemporary African realities, nor, more important and less forgivable, of the legacy of colonial rule?

Was not this dream of a model Africa in which Africans would faithfully adhere to the liberal democratic institutions transferred at independence and uphold a mixed economy in which the interests of the ordinary people would be served in reality a pipe dream in the context of a plethora of states that had for the most part only been cobbled together fifty odd years before? Will not historians be kinder in their judgement of these sometimes unlikely states created by the colonial rulers when they come to assess the post independence period than the journalists and political scientists who wring their hands in despair today? Will they not judge the experience of independence in terms of the African experience of colonial rule, which has been undergoing serious revision by historians as the true secrets of the colonial rulers emerge from the archives? Will they not compare favourably the impressive economic transformations that even the most impoverished of African states in question have undergone since independence with the little that was done for them under colonial rule? Given the little attention that any of the European colonial powers gave to building national political and economic structures during the period of their rule will not historians of the future see the very survival of these states as something of an economic and political miracle?

In this essay, therefore, I want to try and project myself forward and see what sort of perspective historians may have on what so many see today as 'the African disaster'.

12. See Michael Twaddle 'The State of African Studies' *African Affairs* 85, 340, July 1986 especially p. 444 and Richard Hodder-Williams, 'African studies: back to the future', *African Affairs* 85, 341. October 1986 pp. 593-604, with their gloomy prognoses for the future.

13. 'Agony in East Africa'. Editorial in *Daily Telegraph* 28 January 1986.

I suggest they will look at the developments of the past twenty five years as part of a continuum in which independence will not be seen as a historical dividing line. All that has happened in the past quarter of a century will be set much more firmly in the context of the colonial experience than is the custom for present-day political scientists and journalists to do. So I first want to examine how the colonial experience has affected the way Africa has developed over the past twenty-five years and I shall suggest that there are many more parallels to be found between the colonial state and the independent state than are usually conceded.

I believe that historians will consider that contemporary judgements about the so called failure of Africa are really judgements made in terms of a Eurocentric dream for an independent Africa in which liberal democracy would be the norm, a dream that was shared only by a few elitist politicians like the Danquahs,¹⁴ who were pushed aside in the struggle for independence by politicians with mass following like Nkrumah. I shall suggest that most African politicians did not share this dream and at best thought as Nyerere did that liberal democracy would only be a slowly acquired habit,¹⁵ and at worst like Nkrumah only paid lip service to it.¹⁶

Finally I believe that future historians will set against the obvious failures of independent African states the very real achievements they have made in comparison with the record of their colonial masters.

A: THE COLONIAL LEGACY

In considering continuities between the colonial period and independence, let us look at the sort of model the colonial state provided in terms of the *Daily Telegraph* editorial. The violence which the editorialist posited as characteristic of contemporary African states was no stranger to the colonial state. The many studies of resistance to colonial occupation have shown that for the most part the colonial state was conceived in violence rather than by negotiation. This violence was often quite out of proportion to the task in hand, with burnings of villages, destruction of crops, killing of women and children, and the execution of leaders.¹⁷ Some military expeditions were

14. See L. H. Ofosu-Appiah *The Life and Times of Dr. J. B. Danquah*, (Accra, Waterville Publishing House, 1974), in particular Danquah's letter of protest against the Removal Order served on him, 12 March 1948, p. 61, in which he wrote that 'the people directly charged with the administration of Government should be directly responsible to the people, with power in the people to change the personnel of Government when they feel that the Government or Cabinet of the day had failed them, or served its time. This constitutional goal I am pledged to pursue without flinching. . .'

15. Julius K. Nyerere interviewed by William E. Smith in 'A Reporter at Large: Transition'. *New Yorker*, 3 March 1986.

16. On the very day of Independence Nkrumah was presenting himself as a committed democrat. See below page 13.

17. See H. L. Wesseling 'Colonial Wars and Armed Peace, 1870-1914' *Itinerario* V, 1981, 2, pp. 53-69.

so barbaric that they caused outrage in the metropolitan press, as did the Voulet and Chanoine expedition in Niger.¹⁸ The colonial state was not only conceived in violence, but it was maintained by the free use of it. Any form of resistance was visited by punitive expeditions that were often quite unrestrained by any of the norms of warfare in Europe. The bloody suppression of the Maji Maji and Herero uprisings in German East and South West Africa are well enough known. The less known atrocities committed in the suppression of the Satiru revolt in Northern Nigeria by the Sultan of Sokoto's forces acting on commission for the British in 1906 were such that the missionary Walter Miller wrote that 'it would be worth Leopold of Belgium's while to pay ten thousand pounds to get hold of what we know of this'.¹⁹ As Edward Lugard, brother of the British High Commissioner in Northern Nigeria, wrote: 'they killed every living thing before them', Women's breasts had been cut off and the leader spitted on a stake.²⁰

Lest these be thought too distant events in the colonial record to have much bearing on the present, one must recall that a man aged eighteen at the time of Satiru, would only have been 72 at the time of Nigeria's independence. Furthermore, the use of violence to suppress protest continued throughout the colonial period and into the period of decolonisation. The bloody massacre of Tirailleurs Sénégalais protesting against delays in paying their benefits and effecting their demobilisation at Thiaroye in Dakar in 1944 sent shock waves throughout the French African empire,²¹ as did the revelations about the brutal treatment of Mau Mau prisoners by the British at the Hola Camp in Kenya through the British African colonies.²² The colonial state, it must be remembered, maintained troops for internal security, not for defence against external aggression. These armies were of course used for this latter purpose when the occasion arose, most notably in the two world wars where African soldiers experienced violence on an unprecedented scale.²³ So too did civilians when their territory became part of the theatre of war. As Terence Ranger wrote of the impact of the First World War on East Africa 'it was the most awe-inspiring, destructive and capricious demonstration of European 'absolute power' that Eastern

18. See Finn Fugelstad *A History of Niger 1850-1960* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 61.

19. Walter Miller to Sir Frederick Lugard, 24 September 1907 in Rhodes House Library, Oxford, Mss. Brit. Emp. s.62. 'Lugard Papers'. Cited in Robert Shenton *The Development of Capitalism in Northern Nigeria* (London, James Currey, 1986), p. 27.

20. *ibid.* Edward Lugard to Sir Frederick Lugard. 21 May 1908.

21. Myron Echenberg '“Morts pour la France”: the African Soldier in France during the Second World War' *Journal of African History*, 26, 4, 1958, p. 376.

22. It also convinced Britain's new Colonial Secretary, Iain Macleod, that 'swift change was needed in Kenya'. Quoted in Jeremy Murray-Brown *Kenyatta* (London, George Allen and Unwin, 1972), p. 299. See also A. Marshall Macphree *Kenya* (London, Ernest Benn, 1968), pp. 151-3.

23. See for example the special issues of the *Journal of African History* on the two world wars: 'World War I and Africa', 19, 1978 No 1; and 'World War II and Africa', 26, 1985, No 4. David Killingray and Richard Rathbone eds. *Africa and the Second World War* (London, Macmillan, 1986).

Africa ever experienced'.²⁴ It must be remembered too that the colonial rulers set the example of dealing with its opponents by jailing or exiling them, as not a few of those who eventually inherited power knew from personal experience.²⁵ Indeed if the colonial state provided a model for its inheritors it was that government rested not on consent but force. Indeed when Nyerere was once pressed on the subject of preventive detention in his country he was quick to point out that Tanzania had inherited the practice from British colonial times.²⁶

If we take up the second theme of the *Telegraph* leader, that of poverty, this was certainly no stranger during the colonial period. The colonial state was certainly not run for the benefit of its inhabitants. The roots of rural poverty, as Palmer and Parsons' volume of essays of that name on Southern Africa demonstrate, lie deep in the policies of the colonial powers.²⁷ In the white settler colonies the best land was appropriated from the African farmer who was crowded into less fertile reserves often with disastrous ecological results.²⁸ Where the main agent of exploitation was the African farmer, he was forced to produce the crops that the colonial rulers required rather than those he needed. Through taxation, compulsory crop cultivation, forced labour and requisition, and in the case of the Portuguese territories physical coercion, the farmer produced the cash crops that the big companies overseas required even at the risk of impoverishment of the land and famine. For many Africans taxation of any kind was a complete innovation. Many others had only paid indirect taxes. And where direct taxation was imposed, it was rarely, if ever, as high as that of colonial state, which at its most oppressive extracted taxes directly in the form of cash, labour and compulsory crop cultivation, and indirectly through duties on imported goods.²⁹ Robert Shenton in his recent book on *The Development of Capitalism in Northern Nigeria* has shown how British taxation policies designed to increase cultivation of cotton and groundnuts in some cases took

24. T. O. Ranger *Dance and Society in Eastern Africa 1890-1970: the Beni Ngoma* (London, Heinemann, 1975), p. 45.

25. For instance Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Hastings Banda of Malawi, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Sultan Mohammed V of Morocco, Seretse Khama of Botswana.

26. William P. Smith 'A Reporter at Large'.

27. Robin Palmer and Neil Parsons eds. *The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa* (London, Heinemann, 1977).

28. For instance Robin Palmer *Land and Racial Domination in Rhodesia*, (London, Heinemann, 1977) but see also Paul Mosley *The Settler Economies: Studies in the Economic History of Kenya and Southern Rhodesia 1900-1963* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983) where he expresses reservations about the conventional view of settler economies in Africa.

29. While it is difficult to calculate the relative burden of taxation imposed on their subjects by those pre-colonial polities which raised revenue through direct taxes and that exacted by the colonial state, it is significant that many inhabitants of pre-colonial polities that did impose direct taxation in cash or kind, for example in Niger, French Soudan and Chad, were forced to migrate in order to earn enough to pay their taxes. See Elliott P. Skinner *The Mossi of the Upper Volta* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1964), pp. 156-8 for the early impact of taxation by the French on the Mossi, who were later to be one of the chief suppliers of migrant labour in West Africa.

up to 50% of a farmer's income from him and led to shortages of subsistence crops which in turn led to famines. As he shows, the colonial rulers themselves were fully aware of the consequences of their policies.³⁰ Similarly later colonial government marketing boards were used as a means of taxing further the potential earnings of the farmer. Yet critics of the independent African regimes seem to suggest that this neglect and exploitation of the farmer was new rather than a major legacy of colonial rule.³¹

Urban poverty and the slums associated with it were not a function of independent Africa but were established features of colonial rule. I recall arriving in Nigeria for the first time in 1953 and nearly retching as I crossed from the Mainland to Lagos Island by Carter Bridge, so rank was the stink from the slums beneath its piers. The bidonvilles of Dakar were a colonial creation of which Senghor was so ashamed that after independence he built a high wall around them so that visitors to his country should not see them as they entered Dakar from the airport.

The third theme in the *Telegraph* editorial is the misgovernment that has characterised independent African governments. Here again we must remind ourselves how little opportunity Africans had of participating in the machinery of government of the colonial state until a few years before its demise. In British Africa only a few chiefs under British indirect rule were allowed any initiative in the administration before 1945. Otherwise all Africans in the administration, whatever the colonial regime, fulfilled a purely subaltern role without executive initiative. As to legislative functions, again these were limited to local government under the system of indirect rule, and to a handful of elected Africans in Nigeria, Senegal and the Gold Coast. Generally in British and French Africa preparation for taking over the legislative, executive and administrative organs of the colonial state by Africans began only after the Second World War. Even where some effort was made to prepare African administrative cadres, they were often treated as second class members of the administration. In the 1950s, newly appointed African administrative officers in Uganda were specifically barred from access to the confidential files, a point that led to much bitterness on their part.³² In many African countries not a few inhabitants exercised the right to vote for the first time at the elections that brought their independent governments to power.

The Congo perhaps provides the most notorious example of the lack of preparation for the transfer of the institutions of state, while Guinea provides a different kind of example, where the French actually tried to destroy

30. See in particular Chapter 6 of Shenton *The Development of capitalism in Northern Nigeria*.

31. See Robert H. Bates, *Essays on the Political Economy of Rural Africa* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983), especially Part III, though he has trenchant criticisms of the effect of the colonial agricultural regime on the peasant.

32. Personal Communication from Professor Lalage Bown based on direct observation in the Eastern Province of Uganda 1955-60.

the very fabric of that state before they departed. They even removed the books from the law library of the Ministry of Justice.³³ Yet the scuttling Belgians received surprisingly little blame in the press for the disasters of the Congo compared with the Congolese themselves. Surely historians of the future will be less preoccupied by the anarchy and savagery that flowed from independence than by the marvel of the survival of the Congo intact as the huge state of Zaire, however far the former corporal who is its current head of state may deviate from the standards of good government as conceived in Brussels, Paris or London.

If the Belgians only prescribed the medicine of democracy for their Congolese subjects on the eve of the transfer of power, we must recall that neither the Spaniards nor the Portuguese rulers of the day had any faith in this type of medication for their own peoples, let alone their African subjects. They had no qualms about their conviction that their states were based on force not consent.

No aspects of post-independence Africa has drawn more criticism by scholars and journalists of the West than the personal power exercised by its leaders. Again it is instructive to look at the colonial model. Colonial governors enjoyed very wide powers without brakes from below. Even in British Africa where some territories had legislative councils these were dominated by an official majority which could be relied on to vote as solidly for any new policy or programme introduced by the Governor as the legislators in today's one party states. In many territories the Colonial Governor ruled by decree or proclamation and even where he had an executive council his decision on policy was overriding since that council's members were all his officials. The Governor also enjoyed to the full the outward trappings of power, living in an imposing palace, driven in large limousines flying the flag, deferred to by all, and on ceremonial occasions dressed in cocked hat and plumes and a quasi-military uniform. In the British territories, he alone was allowed to use red ink to minute or sign official documents.

This again was a model not lost on the inheritors of the colonial state. The model for the successors was invariably derived from that of the colonial masters. Thus ex-Sergeant Jean Bedel Bokassa modelled his coronation as Emperor of Central Africa on that of a former French corporal. Americans will recall Washington Irving's allegorical version of the European folk-tale about Rip Van Winkle. In Irving's version he becomes a Catskill villager who slumbers through the American Revolution to awake to the many changes that have taken place in his village. Among these is the new sign on the Inn. Before he slept it was a crude picture of George III. The

33. Personal communication from Irene Brown. Most of the examples of what the French did on leaving Guinea are not published but fall into the category of 'on dit que'. See, however, Claude Rivière *Guinea: the Mobilisation of a People* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1977), p. 83, where he says of the departing French that some destroyed equipment before they left, others carried away files, while one group of soldiers set fire to their barracks.

uniform has now been changed and the name transmogrified from King George to George Washington.³⁴ For a more sinister comparison we might remember that the OGPU of the Russian revolutionary state had its direct antecedents in the Tsar's okhrana.

Another theme in the *Telegraph* leader is the destruction of the pillars of law in African societies. Again we must look back at the colonial model. In French Africa until 1946, all Africans but a few citizens were under a regime of administrative law whereby they were subject to summary justice with no right of appeal. In 1914 Lugard specifically outlawed the representation of defendants by lawyers in the magistrate's courts of the South where a British model judiciary had been installed, albeit with massive problems and defects. In The Congo and Portuguese territories, too, the Africans had no access to metropolitan style legal institutions. These existed only for the European inhabitants or in the case of the Portuguese territories the handful of *assimilados*. They were made available to Africans only on the eve of independence or immediately afterwards.

Again, what is remarkable is that so much of the trappings and spirit of these hastily implanted systems have survived rather than broken down. I am sure all were moved that out of the misery and anarchy that has bedevilled Uganda for the past decade and a half the apparent end should be marked by a bewigged and scarlet robed Chief Justice swearing in the new Conqueror-President Museveni—and what is more that it should have been a white Ugandan in a post that in Uganda has held few promises of retirement benefits.

The final point made by the *Telegraph* leader was that economic life had been destroyed. Of course in terms of exports and imports this has often been the case as countries like Nigeria have built up massive overseas debts, cannot afford imports and have neglected agricultural exports. But as Pius Okigbo, former economic adviser to the Nigerian Government, so forcefully pointed out in a recent lecture, the real problem is that the health of African economies is judged by the outside world in terms of the size of their imports and exports.³⁵ This too of course is a legacy of the colonial period when the colonial rulers were little concerned with measuring the African domestic economy but were principally interested in the size of its import-export economy. Thus during the Depression of the 1930s there was crisis for the colonial rulers whose income was reduced, for the import-export firms whose crops fetched abysmal prices on the world market, and for those

34. Marcus Cunliffe 'The Cultural Patrimony of the United States' in Prosser Gifford ed. *The Treaty of Paris (1793) in a Changing States System* (Lanham, Maryland, University Press of America and Washington D.C., Wilson Center, 1985), p. 177.

35. Pius Okigbo 'The Nigerian Economy in the next decade: possibilities of self-reliance.' St. Antony's College Oxford, African Affairs Seminar, 13 March 1986. Discussion.

African farmers who were involved in the sector of the agricultural economy. But for the subsistence crop producer and the craftsmen there was something of a boom.³⁶ Similarly in many countries that are apparently suffering in terms of their import-export economy, there is today something of an internal boom. If African leaders have tended to judge the health of their economies in terms of imports and exports, they are only following a colonial precedent.³⁷

The colonial rulers, furthermore, hardly set a good example of operating the economy in the best interests of their subjects: profits were expatriated not invested in local industries, providing a parallel with, though here not a model for, the present salting of ill-gotten gains by African leaders in the banks of Switzerland and other safe havens of the Western world. We must recall too the price rings, the lack of local industrial development and the lodging of the assets of marketing boards in metropolitan banks before we talk too much about mismanagement of the economy by African successor states. As Ralph Austen has recently emphasised, Patrick Manning has demonstrated that considerable economic damage was done to Dahomey by the French 'who used it to subsidise less profitable French possessions, to fulfil their own ambitions, or to respond to the pressures of local European economic interests.'³⁸ As Austen further emphasises: 'The economic and political malaise afflicting the African continent today with such breadth and severity... must have deep roots in a past about which so little is generally known'.³⁹

A final point concerning the colonial legacy to Independent Africa concerns the state structures that were handed over at independence. The borders of these states, it may be tedious to remind ourselves, were erected without reference to African realities in the chanceries of Europe. But having created them, colonial powers did little to foster a sense of national unity within them. The French territory of Upper Volta for instance was not created until 1920, was dismembered in 1932 and divided up among its neighbours, only to be re-established in 1947, thirteen years before it became independent, German Kamerun and Togo were divided between the French and British after the First World War, while, although the

36. See S. M. Jacobs 'Report on Taxation and Economics of Nigeria', 1934 in Rhodes House Library Mss. Afr. t. 16 where he writes '... Nigeria in *all internal respects* has not suffered from an economic depression. Her production of yams, cassava, fish, corn, and her exchange of all her produce goes on as before'. Quoted in Shenton *The Development of Capitalism in Northern Nigeria* p. 101.

37. The health or otherwise of a colonial economy was measured almost exclusively in terms of imports and of agricultural and mineral exports since there was little attempt by the colonial authorities to assess the volume of production of food crops for local consumption or of locally manufactured goods, for example cloth, pots and iron work.

38. This point from Patrick Manning's *Slavery, Colonialism and economic Growth in Dahomey, 1640-1960* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982), (see especially Chapter 10) is made by Ralph Austen in 'African Economies in Historical Perspective' *Business History Review*, Spring 1985, p. 103.

39. Austen in *ibid* p. 101.

separate Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria were amalgamated by Lugard in 1914, it was a token amalgamation which did not truly bring them into a meaningful relationship with each other.⁴⁰ The two French federations of Equatorial and West Africa were broken up by the French against the wishes of the majority of the constituent colonies on the eve of independence. Furthermore it has been argued, convincingly, that the system of indirect rule, employed by the British, was a divisive one in that it emphasised the integrity of the pre-colonial political unit as against the new colonial state. And up until the mid-forties there were still powerful advocates in the Colonial Office who saw the native authorities as the building blocks of independence.⁴¹

This has been a deliberately selective view of the colonial past but, I hope, a corrective one that the Cassandras of contemporary Africa would be advised to take into account.

B: WHOSE DREAM WAS IT ANYWAY?

We come now to my second theme: how far did Africans share the dream of the colonial rulers for Africa? In the first place, it has to be remembered that the liberal democratic ideal was espoused only by the British and French for their African colonies. Though at home the Belgians shared these ideals, they only very belatedly suggested that they might be appropriately transferred to their colonial subjects.⁴² In both Spain and Portugal liberal democracy had succumbed many years since to Fascist regimes, so for their overseas subjects there was not even a metropolitan model of democracy to aspire to. In the case of the Portuguese their African colonies were considered integral parts of the metropolis and, far from instruments of power being transferred to African subjects, control of the state was seized by them by force of arms. There was thus no obligation placed on the victors to maintain any particular form of government.⁴³

In all the French Black African states, with the exception of Guinea, and in all the British African states, including Zimbabwe, the transfer of power was negotiated and made conditional on the acceptance of a liberal demo-

40. See Michael Crowder 'Lugard and Colonial Nigeria: Towards an Identity' *History Today* 36, February 1986, pp. 23-29.

41. R. D. Pearce *The Turning Point in Africa: British Colonial Policy 1938-1948* (London, Frank Cass), 1982, especially Chapter 3.

42. Crawford Young *Politics in the Congo: Decolonisation and Independence* (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1965), Chapters 3 and 4.

43. In Guinea-Bissau, for instance, the PAIGC carried out a General Election in the liberated zones in 1972 two years before the Portuguese recognised the independence of its former colony, an independence which the Guinea-Bissau leaders had anyway effectively proclaimed in September 1973. See Basil Davidson 'Portuguese-speaking Africa' in *Cambridge History of Africa* 8 (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 788-9. Another example would be the Algerian Revolution though here there was a deliberate move to revalidate many of the institutions and much of the legislation of the erstwhile colonial regime because the FLN had failed to build political institutions of its own during the long and bitter struggle with the French. See Clement Henry Moore 'The Maghrib' in *ibid.* pp. 580-82.

cratic constitution inspired by the metropolitan model. What we have to ask ourselves is how far the African parties to these negotiations were ideologically committed to these constitutions? In Francophone and Anglophone Africa educated Africans soon learnt that the pen was mightier than the sword in dealing with their particular colonial masters and turned the democratic ideals and institutions of their masters against them and asked why they espoused democracy at home and denied it abroad. The Senegalese politician Lamine Gueye in his autobiography recalls the irony of the 'Liberté, Egalité et Fraternité' emblazoned on the offices of a colonial administration which practised none of these three virtues as far as their African subjects were concerned.⁴⁴ An educated chief like Tshekedi Khama in the then Bechuanaland Protectorate skilfully manipulated British press, parliament and public opinion to block measures of the local administration to which he was opposed. But if we examine his own life closely we find that while he was keen on his own rights, and went to great lengths to defend them, he was none too careful with respect to those of his own subjects.⁴⁵ David Williams has hypothesised that the emirs in Northern Nigeria finally agreed to back self-government and independence under the Sardauna of Sokoto because they believed he would be less insistent on the implementation of democracy than the British showed clear signs of being if they continued administering their country any longer.⁴⁶

African leaders may have skilfully pressured the British and French to transfer their models and when finally they agreed to do so accepted them as a condition of gaining independence, just as Nkrumah had to accept a final election as a precondition of independence for Ghana.⁴⁷ But did this mean that they implicitly believed in them as anything other than as a means to an end? The answer is surely 'No'. Only thus can we explain the rapid dismantling of these constitutions in form or spirit by nearly all who were party to the independence agreements. A few days after Ghana's independence, Nkrumah gave a press conference in which he assured the world's press that 'We shall help [other African states] by our example of successfully working a parliamentary democracy'.⁴⁸ But within a few days more he had moved into Christiansborg Castle, the seat of the colonial governors, arranged for his own portrait to appear on currency and postage stamps, and started on the road to the acquisition of unchecked personal power. The commitment to liberal democracy thereafter tended to be the exclusive concern of the opposition, but how shallow this was may be illustrated by the example of Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone. His All People's Congress (APC) had

44. Lamine Gueye *Itinéraire africaine* (Paris 1966), p. 79.

45. See Michael Crowder 'Tshekedi Khama: Statesman' in R. F. Morton and Jeff Ramsay eds. *Botswana: Making of a Nation* (Gaborone, Longman) (forthcoming).

46. David Williams: Personal Communication.

47. Ofose-Appiah *Danquah* pp. 130-1.

48. *West Africa* 16 March 1957.

campaigned against the ruling Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) in part on the basis that it was abusing democracy. Having won the election despite heavy rigging by the Government, and finally acceding to power several coups later, Stevens set about creating the one party state that the SLPP had not quite dared to. It is clear that for all but a few leaders—Seretse Khama of Botswana and Dauda Jawara of The Gambia being the notable exceptions—the commitment to liberal democracy was a transitory one. Nor of course were the military who succeeded them so committed, coming from a very different tradition of dealing with people.

Was it not a staggering piece of arrogant paternalism that the European powers should prescribe for their African dependencies a model that had had such a chequered career on their own continent and criticise them for failing to work it? African leaders were for the most part aware of the many attacks on democracy experienced by Europe during the years that they had been under its tutelage. They had seen how weak democracies could be in the face of a determined fascist leader like Mussolini. Not all were convinced by their masters' condemnations of Hitler. It is not for nothing that a fair number of African boys were named Adolf in the early forties.⁴⁹ But democracy remained, in the eyes of the Western press, the panacea for Africa. Thus there was general rejoicing at Nigeria's return to civilian rule in 1979 and general hostility to the military coup that brought it to an end in December 1983, even though there was rejoicing by the general population at the demise of a corrupt and increasingly oppressive regime. A former Labour Minister in the British Foreign Office concerned with Africa, Ted Rowlands, was reported by *West Africa* as appearing to be calling for economic sanctions against Nigeria for 'abandoning democracy'.⁵⁰ While the *Daily Express* referring to the new military ruler, General Buhari, wondered whether the Queen 'will take this despot's hand'.⁵¹

What African leaders surely appreciated more perceptively than those who wished liberal democratic constitutions on them was that liberal democracy had only worked in those countries of Europe where there was relative lack of inequality, a deep-rooted sense of national identity, and a consensus as to the ideal model for the government of the state. Where, as in Zimbabwe, such conditions did not obtain, and where there were two major ethnic groups vying for power, the operation of the liberal democratic constitution became very close in character to the operation of democracy in Northern Ireland. There was certainly genuine belief on the part of those African leaders who advocated the one-party state, however much later they were to pervert it to their own ends, that it would be less divisive than the

49. I have come across one Nigerian named Hitler, a Motswana named Mussolini, and been told of two sons of a Togolese called respectively Bismarck and Goebbels.

50. *West Africa* 16 January 1984.

51. Cited in *ibid.*

two-party model of the British or the multi-party model of the French.⁵² Nor were African leaders particularly committed to the equitable distribution of resources that their election manifestoes promised and their talk of African socialism may have suggested. Since the means to independence was to be through the ballot box, they had necessarily to persuade the electorate by offering to implement programmes that would benefit them. With independence won, the behaviour of African politicians has differed little from that of the majority of office-seekers in promoting personal advancement and profit, with some pork barrelling for their homeboys. Africans were much more hard-nosed, realistic and even cynical about what independence portended. Rosy dreams were left to the departing colonial masters and the metropolitan press. Indeed as *West Africa* remarked almost petulantly at Ghana's independence celebrations 'the Accra crowds were much less demonstrative than expected'.⁵³ Its then editor, David Williams, tells the story of Sir Milton Margai who was overseeing the arrangements for the independence service in the Freetown Cathedral. When the Bishop suggested he might like to give a second thought to the choice of one hymn which contained what he felt was the inappropriate second verse: 'Though the darkness deepens, Lord with me abide'. 'Exactly' replied Sir Milton.⁵⁴ David Williams also tells of how journalists at Nigeria's independence had to file their stories three hours before the ceremonial lowering of the Union Jack in order to have their stories on the British breakfast table. All wrote of the dancing in the streets that followed the raising of the Nigerian flag. In fact when David Williams and a fellow-journalist toured the streets after the midnight ceremonial they met only desultory groups wending their way home. His colleague shouted out of the car: 'Dance, Dammit, you're meant to be dancing'.⁵⁵ To be fair, however, to the British, it must be remembered that the democratic dream was more enthusiastically supported in the corridors of Whitehall than in the offices of the District Officers who, as Sylvia Leith-Ross has shown in her memoirs of Nigeria, were much more apprehensive of its application to the societies among which they worked.⁵⁶

I would like to conclude with the more positive assessment of the last quarter century of African history that I believe will be accorded by historians of the future. I need not record the failures of Africa—these can be read about daily in the papers.

52. Julius Nyerere immediately comes to mind. Another example is Mamadou Dia, the former Prime Minister of Senegal.

53. *West Africa* 16 March 1957. 'Ghana takes it calmly'. Two and a half years later *West Africa* used a similar headline 'Lagos takes it calmly' for its report on the independence celebrations of Nigeria.

54. David Williams: Personal Communication.

55. *ibid.*

56. Sylvia Leith-Ross *Stepping Stones: Memoirs of Colonial Nigeria, 1907-1960* (London, Peter Owen), 1983, in particular Section V covering the years 1951-55.

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C: AFRICAN ACHIEVEMENT

I am convinced that historians of the future will find much more to the credit of Africa than current press punditry and academic despondency at present will admit. And I think that their judgement will be made in the context of the colonial record.

Here it is instructive to listen to Julius Nyerere's recent justification *pro vita sua* made just after he relinquished the Presidency of Tanzania.⁵⁷ It is instructive not least because Tanzania is usually cited as one of Africa's worst basket-cases in economic terms. In 1961, he recalled, on the eve of independence and after nearly seventy years of colonial rule only 486,000 children were in primary school. Today there are over three and a half million, in his own words 'a tremendous achievement unmatched anywhere else in Africa'. In 1961 80% of the adult population was illiterate. Today, according to the Tanzanian Government, 85% can read and write. In 1961 only 11% of the population had access to clean water—today, Nyerere claims, nearly 50% have access to clean water within 450 yards of their homes. The availability of health services, particularly in the rural areas has improved out of all recognition. The ratio of doctors to population has been reduced from 1:830,000 to 1:26,000. The mortality rate of infants has nearly halved while life expectancy for adults has risen from 35 to 51.

Of course all this was achieved at a tremendous cost to the economy with the accumulation of massive international debts. We know that in many African countries these debts have been amassed not through genuine attempts at betterment of the lives of the people but by large scale squandering of resources and corruption. Two points have to be made about the debts of African countries. In many cases they were built up in a genuine attempt to make up for the sad development record of the colonial governments. We should also remind ourselves that some of the spectacular failures in African development were part of development plans concocted largely in the metropole to buttress the colonial state, for instance the notorious Tanganyika groundnut scheme and the Gambia poultry project. Moreover, in the post-colonial era, many African development plans and projects were the outcome of advice by foreign experts.⁵⁸

The financial strains experienced by the post-independence governments have also been due to a sometimes over-zealous concern to improve the inadequate communications systems left by the colonial powers and to build the foundations of an industrial infrastructure that would make them less dependent on supplies from the First World. Much more directly responsible for these economic problems are facts such as these: in 1979, as Nyerere

57. Interview with William E. Smith 'A Reporter at Large'.

58. See the admirable critique of the role of foreign experts in African development in Paul Richards *Indigenous Agricultural Revolution* (London, Hutchinson University Library for Africa), 1985.

put it, Tanzania was paying nine times as much for its oil though using less than before the oil crisis began. To buy a seven ton truck in 1981 his country had to produce four times as much cotton, three times as many cashew nuts, ten times as much tobacco, and three times as much coffee as five years earlier.⁵⁹

As Nyerere complained at the Cancun North-South summit in 1981: Our balance of payment difficulties are enormous and getting greater. This is not because we are trying to live as though we were rich. It is because our already low income is constantly being reduced because of our participation in international trade. . . We find ourselves always selling cheap and buying dear. . . we are asking for a chance to earn our living in the international system.⁶⁰

I believe that historians will also see these problems in this perspective, and I believe that, in the context of the colonial legacy and the economic vicissitudes of independence (whether self-inflicted or brought about by the caprices of the world market), they will marvel that by and large the post-colonial state in Africa has remained intact, often despite the machinations of erstwhile colonial powers or the conflicting interests of East and West as in the cases of Biafra, Chad and Angola. They will marvel that the map of Africa has remained largely the same as it was at independence and that there have been so few wars between the post-colonial states though they were left with so many of the problems that in Europe have been the cause of war: ill-defined frontiers, split ethnic groups and so forth. In the thirty years period 1914-1944, as we know, Europe was ravaged by two major wars, as a result of which the boundaries of Europe were twice redrawn. In the thirty year period following the independence of Sudan in 1956, there has been marginal readjustment of the African map, and surprisingly little interstate hostility and when it has broken out it has usually been quickly resolved. Many potentially explosive situations have been defused by the little-known but often highly effective Conciliation Committee of the Organisation of African Unity.

Against the internal violence of Chad and Uganda we must set the large number of African countries where such violence has been minimal, and remember that even the three year long Biafran civil war in Nigeria came to an end without recrimination and in a spirit of reconciliation on the part of the victors that was without precedent in Europe or the Americas. We must also recall that when for instance South Africans use the examples of Uganda or Chad to argue against the transfer of power to their own African majority, the surprising thing is that the most secure group in Africa since independence has in fact been the whites themselves. We must further remind ourselves that some of the most extreme forms of violence

59. Julius Nyerere in interview with William E. Smith 'A Reporter at Large'.

60. *Ibid.*

perpetrated in post-colonial Africa have been by the whites of Rhodesia and South Africa.

If it seems that I have presented this case as though it were that of a defence lawyer, this has been deliberate. Africa has in a very real sense been on trial for the desperate situation in which she has found herself twenty-odd years after independence. The blame for this situation has almost universally been placed upon African leaders. I have tried to show that that blame properly should be divided between these leaders and their colonial predecessors. I have also tried to show that the criteria by which Africa is being judged are Eurocentric ones. Finally I have suggested that historians of the future will set against the many failures of African leaders since independence their very real achievements which the Western press so often ignores. I rest my case.

THE APARTHEID ISSUE AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY: STALEMATE OR GATHERING STORM?

NEWELL M. STULTZ

NEXT DECEMBER (1986), four decades will have elapsed since the United Nations General Assembly first took up the question of official race policy in the Union of South Africa. In 1946 and for several years thereafter the specific issue was limited to the complaint of India that the Union was officially discriminating against its then 285,000 citizens of Indian origin, in contravention of existing agreements between the two governments. General Assembly consideration of South African race relations *in general* commenced only at its seventh session in 1952, but since that time this topic (apartheid, as it is now universally known) has been raised in every session but one, the 19th in 1964.¹ (For ten years the two related South African race questions were carried forward in parallel fashion in the General Assembly until they were finally merged in 1962.) Surely, no subject matter has been more enduring before the world body than the discriminatory treatment officially accorded persons of colour in South Africa.

Nor over the years has any topic been more time consuming. The high-point in this respect to date probably occurred in the General Assembly's 27th session in 1972. In that year the Special Political Committee of the General Assembly (which has been the UN arena wherein the fullest discussions of this matter have ordinarily been held) devoted no fewer than 19 of its total of 51 meetings to discussing just apartheid. In time this extensive consideration resulted in the General Assembly itself agreeing to seven resolutions on various aspects of the question, although all but one of these resolutions were approved in rapid succession on the same day, 15 November. The following year, fully 12 per cent of *all* resolutions adopted by the General Assembly contained attacks on South Africa in one form or

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1. Though widespread racial discrimination has existed officially in South Africa since the founding of the Union of South Africa in 1910, the characterization of this discrimination as 'apartheid' dates only from the current ruling National Party's electoral victory of May 1948. Thus, strictly speaking, the General Assembly's treatment of this question in its first and second sessions ought not to be considered under this heading, though no harm to the substance of the matter seems to result from doing so. The Union of South Africa became the Republic of South Africa on 31 May 1961.

another, according to a subsequent estimate of the South African foreign minister.²

From 1946 through 1984 (the last year for which at this writing General Assembly votes are readily available), the General Assembly passed no fewer than 215 resolutions dealing principally, or exclusively, with South Africa, not including the very many others that referred to South African race relations in passing or in some more general context. This is an average of 5.6 such resolutions per year. Fully one third of the total number, however, were adopted during just the last six years of this period, that is, after 1978. On the face of it, then, the tempo of the General Assembly's concern with apartheid has increased very appreciably during the past decade. Below we shall see that this is due in large measure to the efforts of the United Nations' Special Committee Against Apartheid (its current designation), a body voted into existence by the General Assembly in 1962.

The votes themselves in the General Assembly on this issue also came to show markedly greater decisiveness over the years we are considering. In 1946 there were two critical votes regarding South Africa, and on the average 41.6 per cent of the states participating in them chose either to support the position favoured by South Africa itself, or abstain. This is still a minority, of course, but a far larger one than the 8.9 per cent of states who in 1984, on the average across seven resolutions, supported the positions presumably favoured by South Africa, or abstained. ('Presumably' because the Republic itself has been prevented from participating in General Assembly business since 1974 due to the refusal of that body to accept the South African delegation's credentials.) If we eliminate the abstentions from these calculations, the decline in average support for South Africa's positions over this period is even more sharp, down from 36.4 per cent of those voting in 1946, to just 3.8 per cent in 1984.

Some of this decline, expressed as it is in percentages, can be seen as a consequence of an absolute growth over the same period in the size of the General Assembly, and especially its Third World membership. An average of just 54 states participated in the two 1946 votes referred to, which contrasts with an average of 150.8 states in 1984, an increase of 279 per cent!

But the arrival at the General Assembly of new members, most of them predictably hostile to South Africa, is only part of the explanation. Almost exactly one third of those states that supported South Africa in one or both of the two 1946 votes mentioned above had become *consistent opponents* of the country by 1984. Except for Turkey, all of these 'change-over' states were Latin American: Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador and four others.

2. South African Institute of Race Relations, *A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa 1974* (Johannesburg, 1975), p. 118. Except as indicated otherwise, all information in this paper is taken, or derived, from official records of the United Nations, or the annual *Yearbook of the United Nations* (New York).

And even South Africa's seven most reliable supporters in 1984 (the US, UK, West Germany, France, Belgium, Canada and Luxemburg) actually sided with the majority in the General Assembly in that year on South African issues more than 40 per cent of the time, taking all seven together.

How should one understand the political evolution of the apartheid issue in the General Assembly sketched in by these facts? On the face of it, it seems clear that by the 1980s South Africa's isolation in the General Assembly had greatly increased, and indeed on some issues, such as the 'validity' of its new constitution in 1983, was nearly total. And while the very longevity of the apartheid issue in the General Assembly might be thought to reflect negatively on the ability of this body to bring that question to any form of final resolution, the annual outpouring of denunciations against South Africa, especially in the last years of the period under review, does foster the impression of a looming political crisis for that country.

Surely this conclusion is inescapable if the treatment accorded South Africa during the first decade of the General Assembly's existence is contrasted with that over the last decade. On the other hand, if the 'baseline' for this comparison is not the first ten years of the General Assembly's existence, but rather the position in the early 1960s, then a somewhat different picture emerges, one more suggestive of legislative *stalemate*. And if we contrast the position *in the early 1970s* with that obtaining a decade later, then this latter suggestion is particularly compelling. Below I shall examine the evidence drawn from these 'in-between' years in an effort to gauge more accurately *current* trends in the General Assembly's consideration of the apartheid issue.

Years of Caution and Deliberate Tact, 1946 to 1960

The General Assembly's treatment of the apartheid issue to the middle of the 1960s has been covered already by Mohamed El-Khawas of Federal City College in Washington, DC, and it seems unnecessary here to do more than summarize selected points in his short but interesting essay.³ From the standpoint of a concern for the evolution of this issue before the General Assembly, El-Khawas identifies two 'thresholds' that were passed during the first 14 years of that body's existence, although he does not himself employ this concept. The first of these thresholds, passed almost immediately, was the establishment, politically, if not legally, of the General Assembly's competence to consider domestic race relations in South Africa. The second, somewhat slower to arrive, was the discrediting of a strategy of conciliation as a practical and useful means of influencing Pretoria on the race question. Below I shall briefly treat each of these points separately.

3. M. El-Khawas, 'The Third-World Stance on Apartheid: the UN record', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 9 (1971), pp. 443-52.

Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter of the United Nations reads as follows:

Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter, . . .

From the time of the very first vote on South African race policy at only the 50th plenary meeting of the General Assembly on 8 December 1946, South Africa has contended that these words preclude, legally speaking, any such consideration, and initially it offered to have the matter, that is, the question of the Assembly's competence, referred to the World Court in The Hague for adjudication. A majority composed largely of Asian and Latin American states rejected this offer, however, and immediately much the same majority approved the resolution mentioned earlier [44(1)] declaring that the Union's treatment of its Indian minority should be in conformity with the country's international obligations and the UN Charter.

This last reference was to Article 55 of the Charter, sub-section c, which states that the United Nations shall promote 'universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion'. The majority argued that Article 55, taken together with the one immediately following, Article 56, in which all members 'pledge themselves to take joint and separate action in cooperation with the Organization for the achievement of [the above] purposes', signifies that UN consideration of race discrimination in South Africa does *not* constitute unlawful intervention in the domestic affairs of a member state.

The states voting *against* this position in 1946, and thus in favour of the principle of non-jurisdiction, were South Africa itself, the US, seven European or other Commonwealth states, and six Latin American countries. The overall vote was 32 in favour and 15 against, with seven abstentions, and hence the resolution carried, though just barely. (Decisions in the General Assembly on questions deemed by the Assembly's elected President to be substantively 'important' must be approved by a two-thirds majority to have effect; other matters, e.g. procedural questions, may be decided by a simple majority vote.)

Six years later, on 5 December 1952, the competency issue came up again, but now in the context of motions treating apartheid in general. This time only five states chose to vote with South Africa, all of them European countries except for Australia. In sharp contrast, 45 states in addition to the US now felt that consideration of the apartheid question at the General Assembly was both right and desirable.

After this, the competency question in the context of South African race relations was, as a practical matter, a 'dead issue' although as late as November 1959 it was raised again by a handful of states as grounds for their not supporting an appeal for members [resolution 1375 (XIV)] to use 'their best endeavours' to help end apartheid. Belgium, Spain and UK, for example, announced on this occasion that the above suggestion constituted improper 'intervention' into South Africa's internal affairs. But at the time of voting both Belgium and Spain abstained and the resolution passed easily 67-3-7.

Four years later even these protests were stilled. On 11 October 1963, South Africa itself opposed a resolution [1881 (XVIII)] calling for the release of persons jailed for opposing apartheid. But 106 states supported the decision, and this time there were no abstentions at all.

Compared with the specific language of contemporary General Assembly resolutions regarding apartheid, the tone of very early declarations on this topic was in retrospect remarkably civil, reflecting a feeling that the issue might be resolved through conciliation. In the early to middle 1950s, for example, the General Assembly politely 'regretted' the Union government's refusal to cooperate with the United Nations to end apartheid, 'invited' that government to reconsider its position, and 'called' upon Pretoria to recognize that, by signing the UN Charter in 1945, it had incurred obligations under Article 56 to end racial discrimination. (South Africa is, of course, a 'charter member' of the UN). In contrast, three decades later, the Assembly in resolution 38/39A in 1983 termed apartheid a 'crime against humanity' while concurrently commending the 'intensifying armed struggle' against what it called the 'illegitimate racist minority regime' in Pretoria.

Obviously, there is a dramatic difference in tone here, explained in part by the widespread supposition during the earlier period, especially in the West, that apartheid could not be ended, or even be significantly modified, except with the active cooperation of Pretoria. That is to say, no 'solution' could be imposed from outside.⁴ Accordingly, the strategy of the majority in the General Assembly in the 1950s was focused on eliciting somehow that cooperation.

At first the approach chosen avoided the suggestion of direct intervention on the part of the United Nations. In 1946, for example, the General Assembly requested that South Africa and India (in later years the government of Pakistan was added) work out their differences *themselves* and merely report progress to the UN at its next session. Later, when it was clear that this approach had failed, a round-table conference was suggested. But in the end this idea proved no more fruitful, although preliminary talks

4. *Yearbook of the United Nations* 1960 (New York), p. 145.

between the Union, India and Pakistan did in fact occur in Cape Town early in 1950. Two years later, in 1952, the Assembly voted to establish a three member 'good offices' commission for the purpose of helping along negotiations between South Africa, India and Pakistan, but this body too was shortly recognized to have failed because the Union's government doggedly refused to recognize it.

Concurrently, and having previously declared itself competent to discuss apartheid in general, the General Assembly created a second three-member commission concerning South Africa. This one was for the purpose of making a 'fact-finding' study of the *overall* racial situation in the country. On grounds that such a fact-finding commission (i) constituted more of an intrusion into South Africa's internal affairs than the good offices commission mentioned above, and/or (ii) could not realistically be expected to accomplish anything very useful, eight states that had voted only a few minutes earlier in favour of the good offices commission did *not* support the creation of this one. Instead, they abstained, leaving South Africa as the only state to vote against creation of both of these new bodies. The 1952 vote affirming the establishment of the fact-finding commission [resolution 616A (VII)] was 35-1-23, and the three countries subsequently appointed to it were Chile, France and Haiti.

Three years (and three lengthy annual reports) later, however, the authority for the UN Commission on the Racial Situation in the Union of South Africa (as the body was formally designated) lapsed when a motion to continue the commission failed to obtain the necessary two-thirds majority in the General Assembly. The vote on the key paragraph was 33-17-9. For a few states (e.g. Australia, Belgium and the UK) the principal reason given for opposing the commission was still jurisdictional. The British delegate, for example, said the fact-finding commission had always been regarded by his government as 'an illegal body'.⁵ But for more members the main problem with the commission was, as the American representative said, that over three years it 'had accomplished little of practical value',⁶ although most delegations expressed the view that its members had done all that could be expected of them. The Canadian representative appeared to speak for many among this 'blocking minority' when he observed that the United Nations risked more than it gained when it adopted courses of action that were demonstrably impractical.⁷ Still, the margin of the commission's defeat on 6 December 1955 was just one vote!

Thus rebuffed, the proponents of stronger measures against South Africa had to be content for the moment (in fact, for the remainder of the decade)

5. United Nations, *Official Records of the General Assembly—Tenth Session. Ad Hoc Political Committee, 21 September to 9 December 1955* (New York), p. 42.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

with resolutions containing language of a type reminiscent of the 1940s, essentially bland appeals to South Africa to change its policies so that these might come to conform to its obligations under the Charter. The votes against South Africa during this period were each overwhelming. For example, of all votes cast on eight resolutions dealing explicitly with South Africa between 1956 and the end of 1959, 82.4 per cent were hostile to the Union government, only 3.2 per cent took positions favoured by Pretoria, and 14.4 per cent were abstentions. But still, these declarations lacked 'bite' (that would come only later) and hence such majorities now were little surprising and perhaps not very meaningful.

Then in 1960 two events happened which portended a dramatic change in the political landscape. The first occurred on 21 March at a previously little-known South African black township named Sharpeville in the southern Transvaal. There a small company of white policemen opened fire on a crowd of Africans, killing 69 persons and wounding 178. Public outrage was intense and world-wide. At the UN, even Great Britain, which had previously been among the few members steadfastly opposing consideration of apartheid on grounds of Article 2(7), now conceded that apartheid was 'so exceptional as to be *sui generis*' and indicated a new willingness to consider proposals concerning apartheid on the merits.⁸

The second event was the admission to the UN of 17 new members, 14 in fact on the same day, 20 September. Sixteen of this total were recently independent black African states. A year later three more black African states would join, and in 1962 yet another three, not counting Algeria. In the span of just two years, the all-African membership in the General Assembly increased from nine (not including South Africa) to 33, making it immediately the UN's second largest caucusing group behind the Afro-Asian group, in which African states themselves now constituted a majority.⁹ From the standpoint of the General Assembly's future deliberations on apartheid, obviously these changes could not fail to make a significant difference.

Years of Transition 1961 to 1962

The failure of South Africa to heed earlier resolutions of the General Assembly, coupled with the extreme provocation of the Sharpeville killings and the growth in African numbers at the UN, inevitably led in the early 1960s to pressures within the Assembly to substitute coercive sanctions against South Africa for the previous, but now largely discredited, efforts at persuasion and conciliation. Here was a proposal bound to destroy the

8. *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1960 (New York), p. 148.

9. For a study of African voting behaviour in the United Nations, see B. D. Meyers, 'African Voting in the United Nations General Assembly', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 4 (1966), pp. 213-27.

essential consensus in the General Assembly that had latterly emerged on the apartheid issue. In April 1961, 26 members, all of them African states and all but eight new members, introduced a motion in the Special Political Committee calling for sanctions against South Africa. Specifically, members were asked to: (i) break diplomatic relations with South Africa, (ii) close their own ports to South African vessels, (iii) forbid their own ships from entering South African ports, (iv) boycott all South African goods and cease exporting to South Africa, and finally (v) refuse landing rights to South African aircraft.

These stipulations were, however, only part of a larger resolution, and when a separate vote was called for and held on the operative paragraph enumerating the above sanctions, it failed to obtain the required two-thirds support. The vote was 42-34-21. Thereupon the proposers withdrew the entire resolution, now deprived of its 'teeth', and the General Assembly then adopted (95-1) a strong but still familiar resolution essentially, and merely, 'deprecating' apartheid.

Seven months later, 28 November 1961, an identical sanctions recommendation to that mentioned above, now joined with a request to the Security Council to consider expelling South Africa from the UN (as only the Security Council has the authority to decide to do), was similarly defeated. However, this time the margin of defeat was only about half that of the earlier proposal, and the supporting majority had grown to over 60 per cent, if abstentions are excluded. The feelings of frustration of this majority were already evident some weeks earlier when on, 11 October, Liberia, Ethiopia, Ghana and Senegal proposed a motion of censure on the South African foreign minister, Eric Louw, who had just addressed the Assembly. With eight states including three of the five Great Powers refusing to participate, and 20 other states abstaining, this wholly unprecedented censure motion passed the General Assembly 67 to 1 (South Africa). The days of conciliation were thus clearly over.

The dam finally burst one year later, 6 November 1962. On this day and for the third time in 20 months the now familiar proposal for five specific sanctions against South Africa came before the General Assembly in the context of a larger and more general motion condemning apartheid. The overall resolution was sponsored this time by three Middle Eastern and five Asian states, in addition to 26 African countries. The terms of the proposed sanctions were almost exactly as before, although this time arms and ammunition were explicitly mentioned as being among the goods that should be denied export to South Africa. However, when Colombia, Sweden and the US asked for a separate vote on that portion of the overall motion referring to the specific sanctions, a separate vote such as had occurred the year before, a bare majority (49-52-5) of the General Assembly this time refused to go along. Clearly, the majority's intent was

to require those states that had previously opposed sanctions either to abstain on the final vote in this instance, or alternately, by voting against the resolution, appear publicly to oppose its general denunciations of apartheid. In the end 13 of these states—seven South American and six European (including Iceland)—did abstain, and the resolution [1761 (XVII)] therefore now passed easily, 67–16–23. The General Assembly was at last officially on record as favouring certain specific sanctions against South Africa as means of ending apartheid, surely a very significant milestone in the legislative evolution of this question.

But this 1962 vote is also interesting for its identification of what might be termed the 'hard core' opponents of sanctions. These 16 included all but two of South Africa's ten highest ranking trading partners, in order of importance (1961 figures): the UK, USA, Japan, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Canada and Australia.¹⁰ (The missing trading partners were West Germany, which would not become a member of the UN until 1973, and Italy, which abstained.) In addition, this group included Spain and Portugal, plus Turkey, Luxembourg, Greece, New Zealand, Ireland and, of course, South Africa itself. It would be against the size and composition of this group that future progress in the campaign to isolate South Africa would have to be measured.

Resolution 1761 did contain one wholly unprecedented provision. In passing it the General Assembly agreed to the establishment of a new 'special committee' for the purpose of keeping South Africa's racial policies under review between sessions of the General Assembly. Authority to select the committee's members was vested in the President of the Assembly, who on 18 February 1963 nominated the following 11 states to serve: Algeria, Costa Rica, Malaysia, Ghana, Guinea, Haiti, Hungary, Nepal, Nigeria, the Philippines and Somalia; all were Third World or Eastern bloc states.

Almost immediately the Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of South Africa (as the new entity was initially titled) assumed a vigorous role in keeping the apartheid issue before both the General Assembly and the Security Council, to each of which it was given direct reporting power. Over the next 20 years the Special Committee held an average of 25 meetings a year, while concurrently its budget grew to nearly \$1 million per annum. In 1966, by resolution 2144 (XXI), the General Assembly voted to recommend further the establishment within the UN Secretariat of a special 'unit on apartheid' (renamed 'Centre Against Apartheid' in 1975) for the purpose in part of assisting the Special Committee in its work.

10. Republic of South Africa, *Statistical Year Book, 1966* (Pretoria), pp. Q 12–Q 13.

Beginnings of a Strategy: 1963-9

From 1963 through to the end of 1969, the General Assembly considered a total of 14 resolutions dealing exclusively with apartheid, or an average of two such resolutions each year. (This figure does not include a number of other resolutions that treated the same matter in a more general context such as resolutions against racism *throughout* southern Africa). In 1970, however, the number of resolutions focused exclusively on apartheid suddenly jumped to seven, and thereafter until 1984 the annual number of such resolutions considered and passed by the General Assembly was usually higher still, often much higher. From the standpoint of those proposing these resolutions, then, 1970 would appear to mark a change in their overt legislative strategy. For this reason I have chosen to treat below the pre- and post-1970 periods separately.

The 14 resolutions mentioned above can be divided easily into two groups. One contains declarations which were in the end typically opposed (including abstentions) by just one or two states (ordinarily South Africa and Portugal), though one resolution in this group—stipulating that South Africa should treat captured ‘freedom fighters’ as prisoners of war under international law—was in fact not supported by eight members, including abstentions. The second group includes resolutions where the number of states casting negative votes was again often no more than two, but a significant number of additional states abstained, 17.6 states on the average.

At the end of the decade, the Special Committee on Apartheid (as it was renamed in 1970) identified three main lines of action taken by the UN in its on-going campaign against apartheid: (i) dissemination of information on the policy itself, (ii) rendering assistance to persons oppressed under the policy, and (iii) promotion of measures to oblige, or force, South Africa to change or abandon apartheid. What is clear is that before 1970 the General Assembly was always close to unanimous when it came to proposals (the first group of eight resolutions) limited to publicizing apartheid’s evils, or to recommending relief and assistance to persons oppressed under apartheid. Where a difficulty arose, at least for a consistent group of about 15 states, was with the acceptance of measures intended to *compel* South Africa to renounce apartheid, above all when this might involve the application of economic sanctions. Such measures were highlighted in six resolutions which together constitute my second grouping.

Compared with the 16 states identified above as opposed to sanctions against South Africa in November 1962, the following changes in the voting had now occurred. Spain, Turkey, Ireland and Greece had fallen away and now tended to *support* sanctions. Of the rest, all but South Africa and Portugal could ordinarily be counted on to abstain; joining in such abstentions, Austria and Italy, each of which had also abstained in 1962, and Malawi, which was not yet a member of the UN at the time of the earlier vote.

The failure of most of the original 16 to continue to vote *against* sanctions could obviously be interpreted as a loss of significant support on the part of South Africa. But it could also be seen as a less important development, namely, the predictable consequence of the certainty after 1962 that the General Assembly would support the application of economic sanctions against South Africa in any event. Abstaining thus recorded disagreement with the sanctions proposal under consideration while avoiding the appearance of publicly siding with the apartheid pariah. As abstaining did not affect the final legislative outcome one way or the other, it was an especially convenient option for the states we have identified. Indeed, it has been *the* option that has been followed more or less consistently ever since by those states (South Africa and Portugal until 1974 excepted) that have felt they could not join with the majority in the General Assembly on particular South African issues, although recently there has been a slight increase in the number of outright negative votes on anti-apartheid resolutions as the provisions of those resolutions have become more strident, or pointed.

Indeed an apparently exceptional instance occurring in 1968 would seem to validate the above interpretation. This was the *rejection* by the General Assembly on 13 December of a resolution introduced by 39 states who sought to have South Africa suspended from membership in the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Seemingly sensing that this proposal might indeed fall short of the required two-thirds support, all 15 of the states identified above voted against it, joining 18 others in doing so. The resolution thus failed of adoption, 55-33-28. For states with serious reservations concerning particulars of various proposed anti-apartheid resolutions, the 'decision-rule' for some years after 1962 therefore seems to have been this: Vote against such resolutions in the General Assembly only when that vote could 'count', that is, make a difference in determining the legislative outcome; otherwise abstain. Throughout this paper we interpret abstentions in this fashion, namely, as expressing opposition to the proposition being voted on, although presumably less intense opposition than that indicated by an outright 'no' vote.

The six resolutions I have referred to above as sanctions motions were not *just* sanctions motions. In fact, as the years passed, the typical resolution advocating sanctions against South Africa nearly doubled in length due to the many other and varied provisions its sponsors chose to 'pack into' its operative paragraphs. An extreme case was resolution 2396 (XXIII) in 1968 which contained 19 of these paragraphs, several with sub-sections. A variety of different 'approaches' to the campaign against apartheid thus came to be advanced concurrently. Apartheid was characterized as a 'crime against humanity' and 'a grave threat to international peace'; anti-apartheid organizations were praised and assistance urged for their continued efforts; help, moral and otherwise, was commended for apartheid's 'victims'; and

an international effort at disseminating information on (that is, against) apartheid was given high priority.

Most frequently, however, resolution 2396 advocated the comprehensive *isolation* of the Republic from normal intercourse with the rest of the world. States were asked, for example, to discourage immigration (implicitly white immigration) into South Africa, and to seek suspension of all cultural, educational and sporting contacts with the country. But most interest was shown in curtailing *economic* linkages with South Africa. In particular, the country's 'main trading partners' were explicitly condemned, as a group, for *de facto* encouraging that Government to persist in its racial policies'. And, finally, an appeal was made to the Security Council to apply 'full implementation of comprehensive mandatory sanctions' against South Africa.

It was thus scarcely surprising that in the end these same trading partners chose not to support resolution 2396. The British delegate stated that, for its part, the UK could scarcely entertain the idea of an 'economic war' against South Africa, while the American representative put forward a position similar to that which a dozen years later would be known as 'constructive engagement'. It was the US view, he said, that 'by maintaining normal diplomatic and economic relationships with South Africa the United States would be in a better position to urge South Africa's Government to reform its policy'.¹¹

Early on, then, it was apparent to the members of the Special Committee that while the majority in the General Assembly in favour of sanctions against South Africa was numerically overwhelming, that majority lacked the support of precisely those states whose cooperation would presumably be necessary if sanctions were to be applied successfully. Moreover, three of the states consistently failing to endorse sanctions were permanent members of the Security Council who were thus in a position to veto a decision to apply *mandatory* sanctions in that organ of the UN where, under the Charter, such a decision would have to be taken, if it were taken at all.

In response to this awareness, the proponents of sanctions hit upon what David A. Kay has called a new 'strategem'.¹² The idea as it developed was to enlarge the membership of the Special Committee by adding a limited number of new members, primarily Western powers. The Committee would thus continue to have its preponderant Third World majority, but the inclusion of some Western states might serve to associate Western states in general, it was hoped, or at least some of them, with future recommendations emerging from the Committee.

11. *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1968 (New York), pp. 107, 110.

12. D. A. Kay, *The New Nations in the United Nations, 1960-1967* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), p. 71.

Accordingly, on 30 November 1964, the Special Committee itself recommended that its membership be broadened to include: (i) some permanent members of the Security Council, (ii) some of South Africa's principal trading partners, and (iii) states from geographic regions not previously represented. And a year later, the General Assembly for its part agreed [resolution 2054 (XX)] to ask its President to designate six new members for the Special Committee to be chosen essentially on the basis of these criteria. However in the following June, 1966, the President had to report in a letter to the Secretary-General that he had been unable to fulfil this assignment. Fourteen of the states approached, he said, including eight I identified above as being consistent opponents of sanctions against South Africa, refused to serve, while those who would agree to join did not collectively meet the stipulated specifications.¹³

In time (1970), these criteria would be reduced to the third alone (geographic representativeness), and the Special Committee would at last be enlarged, initially to 15, and later to 18 members. But this did nothing to change fundamentally the political complexion of the Committee as the consistent opponents of sanctions against South Africa adamantly refused to be coopted. In its annual report the year before (1969), the Special Committee had to concede that its 'most significant contribution' to the elimination of apartheid to that time was probably limited to the assistance it had been able to give to people directly oppressed under apartheid, together with their 'national liberation movements'.¹⁴ At the end of the decade, the Special Committee's preeminent goal of sanctions against South Africa seemed scarcely closer than it had been in 1962.

Turning-up the Volume: 1970-84

As indicated above, the seven years before 1970 can be distinguished from the period following in terms of the *frequency* of General Assembly resolutions condemning apartheid. During the former period the Assembly passed a total of only 14 such resolutions, or an average of two per annum. But over the next 15 years the equivalent total was 176, for an average of 11.7 per year. Focusing upon the latter period alone, the first thing that can be noted is that *within* it this progression in the frequency of anti-apartheid resolutions is also evident. From 1970 to the end of 1976 the Assembly passed 60 such resolutions, but from 1977 to the end of 1984 the number was 116.

There was at least one other interesting difference. Before 1970 all votes

13. United Nations, *Official Records of the General Assembly Annexes Twenty-First Session, 1966* (New York), p. 7.

14. United Nations, *Report of the Special Committee on the Policy of Apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa* General Assembly, *Official Records, Twenty-Fourth Session, Supplement, No. 25 (A/7625/Rev. 1)*, p. 33.

on South African issues in the General Assembly were to some degree split-votes, that is, non-unanimous. But from 1970 until 1976 there were six resolutions (10 per cent of all such resolutions) where either the voting was unanimous or there was no recorded vote at all; that is, the motion was, as the record reads, 'passed without objection'. However, from 1977 to 1984 there were 33 such votes, covering 28.4 per cent of all approved anti-apartheid resolutions. In short, after 1970 the number of General Assembly motions dealing with South Africa increased, and moreover a steadily higher percentage of them were adopted unanimously or without opposition. Substantively, these tended to be resolutions such as those mentioned previously where the object was either to promote the dissemination of information on apartheid, or to assist persons (student refugees, political prisoners) oppressed under the policy.

This evidence would seem to suggest a growing political isolation of South Africa in the UN in the 1970s and early 1980s, but in fact this is not the case, at least not if viewed in terms of aggregate voting figures. In the period 1963-69, an average of 11.2 votes dissented from resolutions attacking the South African regime, including abstentions. During the next period of seven years this figure dropped very slightly to 11.12, but then between 1977 and 1984 it rose again to 13.30. That is, slightly more member states were opposing motions on South Africa, on the average, or abstaining on them, at the end of our period than at the beginning, and this occurred despite a striking increase in the number of such resolutions and a greater number of unopposed or uncontested resolutions.

How can we explain this? Such results might be expected to arise as a result of three circumstances, appearing singularly or together: (i) reiteration or repetition of essentially the same issue, calling forth multiple expressions of the same (and relatively large) minority voting bloc, (ii) the emergence of new issues producing significant dissenting minorities, and (iii) growth in the number of states willing to break with the majority position in the General Assembly on familiar, or enduring issues of South African policy.

Let me examine reiteration first. In 1971, to take a representative early year of the period under review, the most divisive resolution dealing with South Africa passed by the General Assembly was one [2775F (XXVI)] which *inter alia* condemned

the continued and increasing co-operation of certain States and foreign economic interests with South Africa in the military, economic, political and other fields, as such co-operation encourages the Government of South Africa in the pursuit of its inhuman policies.

This resolution was actively opposed by six states (Australia, France, Portugal, South Africa herself, Great Britain and the USA) largely because

of their opposition in principle to isolating South Africa, while 22 other members abstained. Four other resolutions passed during the same session confronted the same issue of isolation, although each in a more specific context: arms sales and immigration to, and sporting contacts with, the country, and acceptance (actually non-acceptance) of the credentials of South Africa's delegation to the UN. Otherwise the remaining six anti-apartheid resolutions adopted in the same session dealt with other matters or dimensions of the problem.

Nine years after this, in 1980 (again to take a representative later year at random) the goal of isolating South Africa was a central object in no fewer than 13 of the 18 anti-apartheid resolutions that the General Assembly passed during its 35th session. Thus separate resolutions called for (i) an end to military and nuclear collaboration with South Africa, (ii) comprehensive economic sanctions against the country, (iii) an oil embargo, (iv) effective mandatory sanctions, (v) a world conference on sanctions, (vi) a sports boycott, (vii) an end to foreign investments in South Africa, (viii) curtailment of the activities of transnational corporations in South Africa, (ix) a cultural boycott, (x) an international campaign to isolate South Africa, and so forth. Not all of these elicited the same level of dissent, of course. In general, the least popular (most divisive) were resolutions proposing comprehensive or economic isolation of South Africa, whereas the most popular (least divisive) were highly focused resolutions (e.g. military and nuclear collaboration, sports boycott) or ones basically informational in their import. The point is that together they more than tripled the opportunity for the expression of 'anti-isolationist' sentiment that was present nine years earlier in 1971, without necessarily varying it.

Perhaps new issues might account for the change, but there was only one 'new issue' that emerged during the period under review demonstrably capable of attracting an appreciable minority vote, and even this might have been considered above as but a reformulation of the isolation, or sanctions, issue. The topic was the state of Israel's relations, or alleged 'collaboration', with Pretoria. In 1973, 1974 and 1975, this matter (including reference to Israel by name) was subsumed under more general resolutions on 'the situation' in South Africa, but in 1976 45 states deemed it to merit separate treatment (ultimately resolution 31/6E) in which they demanded 'that Israel desist forthwith from and terminate all forms of collaboration with South Africa, particularly in the military and nuclear fields'.

The impulse here is obviously by now the familiar one of isolating South Africa, but whereas a general resolution directed towards this purpose in 1975 (3411G) including a brief reference to Israel failed to receive the endorsement of just 31 states, 48 states dissented from resolution 31/6E the following year. Evidently the central focus upon Israel in 31/6E created a problem for more than a dozen states seemingly independent of the merits or

demerits of isolating South Africa; hence my identification of this as a 'new issue'. Nonetheless, prompted in part by the continued interest in the matter by the Special Committee Against Apartheid, resolutions condemning relations between Israel and South Africa continued to be introduced annually. All were passed to the end of the period under review, but the number of states dissenting from these resolutions was unfailingly higher than any of the other South Africa-connected motions introduced in these years.

Comparisons of what might be termed 'dissent levels' in the General Assembly across time are difficult because of differences from year to year in the detailed substance of what is being voted upon. Yet one consequence of the proliferation of anti-apartheid resolutions since the early 1970s is that it is now possible to examine changes in the level of dissent from specific proposals that have tended to reappear in much the same specific language year after year since then. Four proposals that have approached such 'hardy perennial' status over the past decade are particularly interesting in this respect in that each has been clearly directed at isolating South Africa in world affairs, a policy which, as I have said, has been a principal object of a majority in the General Assembly since 1962. These four recurring resolutions have sought to end, respectively: (i) foreign investments in the Republic, (ii) economic collaboration with the country in general, (iii) nuclear (or in instances nuclear *and* military) collaboration between South Africa and the West, and (iv) oil sales to South Africa. In order to see if more, or perhaps even fewer, states were dissenting on these topics at the end of the period than earlier, I have calculated for each question or issue the average number of 'no' votes together with abstentions for the period 1981-3, and for all earlier years taken together. (In 1984 these topics were all taken up once again in a single omnibus resolution (39/72A) from which a total of 30 states dissented.) The results are shown in Table No. 1 below.

TABLE 1
Average No. Dissenting Votes

Issue	Before 1981 ¹⁵	1981-83
Investments	10.4 (5)	9.3
Oil embargo	20.7 (3)	19.3
Economic collaboration	29.8 (4)	29.3
Nuclear collaboration	20.3 (4)	24.3

15. Figures in parentheses identify the number of years covered by the stipulated average.

The conclusion would seem to be that, at least during the latter years of the period under review, there was *no great change* in the level of General Assembly dissent on key issues of South African policy. And such change as did occur, limited as it was, was generally *towards* the majority positions on these matters. Thus the slight *increase* after 1977 (identified above) in the average number of states dissenting on resolutions condemning South Africa must arise on other grounds. In fact, that increase seems to have been due most of all to what I have earlier termed a 'reiteration' of divisive questions, resulting in repeated expressions of essentially the same minority voting bloc.

In fact, the principal empirical conclusion of this paper is that to 1984 at least, key votes in the General Assembly on South Africa exhibited *an essential continuity* in support levels over several decades more clearly than they did a growing unanimity of opinion, with one important exception or qualification to be mentioned below. Economic sanctions against South Africa having become the foremost goal of the Special Committee Against Apartheid and the broad number of states and interests for which it clearly speaks, I shall further substantiate this general point with references to votes on that specific issue. Table 2 records votes on four similar resolutions on sanctions passed in the General Assembly over a period of 22 years.

TABLE 2
Votes on South Africa Sanctions Resolutions

Year	Resolution No.	Vote
1962	1761 (XVII)	57-16-23
1969	2506B (XXIV)	80-5-23
1980	35/206C	115-10-20
1984	39/72A	123-15-15

What is immediately clear from these figures is that the erosion in opposition to sanctions that has taken place since 1962 had occurred fully 17 years ago, and that since 1969 there has actually been some growth in the number of states prepared openly to *oppose* sanctions against South Africa. Comparing in particular the 1962 and the 1984 votes, it can be seen that only Turkey among those who voted against sanctions in 1962, *favoured* sanctions in the latter year. It is true (and this is the qualification noted above) that 15 members that abstained in 1962, voted *for* sanctions in 1984 (all South American states except for Thailand). But they were replaced by eight other states, one of which, the Ivory Coast, had itself *supported* sanctions 21 years earlier. (The seven others were not yet in the UN in 1962. Three are near-neighbours of South Africa whose economies are of necessity closely tied to that of the Republic: Botswana, Lesotho and Malawi).

The principal point, then, is that, despite the considerable effort that the Special Committee Against Apartheid and others put into isolating South Africa in the General Assembly after 1962, the net result on the key issue of comprehensive economic sanctions against that country has been the shift of *just one vote* from among what I have referred to as the 'hard core' opponents of sanctions to 'favourable', and four others (Australia, Spain, Greece and New Zealand) into the abstentions column. As late as 1984, *none* of South Africa's ten most important trading partners (1981 figures, but excluding Switzerland, which is not a member of the UN) was prepared to support comprehensive economic sanctions against the country, though, interestingly, in the year before four of these (Japan, Belgium, the Netherlands and Sweden) *were* prepared to countenance a cessation of foreign investments in the Republic.¹⁶ However, of these only Japan can be counted as already a significant investor in South Africa.

In 1983 the Special Committee Against Apartheid declared in its annual report that 'the great majority of states which failed to support the call by the General Assembly in resolution 1791 (XVII) of 6 November 1962 for sanctions against South Africa now support such measures'.¹⁷ Clearly, this statement exaggerates to the point of error.

Agenda-Building

Ought we to conclude therefore that the General Assembly's treatment of the apartheid issue to 1984 had become stalemated? Or is some other, vaguely apocalyptic, metaphor more appropriate? In fact, I wish to argue that in a sense this treatment did result internationally in *both* a parliamentary stalemate to 1984 *and* a 'gathering storm' regarding South Africa, and I attempt to justify this seeming contradictory conclusion below with reference to some of the social science literature on 'agenda-building', that is, the process by which some issues become salient to significant publics, while others fail to do so.

In their 1972 book on this latter topic, Roger Cobb and Charles Elder distinguish between two kinds of 'agendas'. One is the *institutional, governmental, or formal* agenda which they define as 'that set of items explicitly up for the active and serious consideration of authoritative decision-makers'.¹⁸ The inference is that, if this consideration results in positive decisions, these will be meaningful, or directly consequential (at least in intent) for the object of the decision-making. The second kind of agenda Cobb and Elder describe as *systemic*. This 'consists of all issues that

16. For a listing of these trading partners, see United Nations, *General Assembly—Official Records: Thirty-Eighth Session, Supplement No. 22 (A/38/22)*, 1983 (New York), p. 85.

17. United Nations, *General Assembly—Official Records*, 1983, p. 50.

18. R. W. Cobb and C. D. Elder, *Participation in American Politics: the dynamics of agenda-building* (2nd edition; Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1983), p. 86.

are commonly perceived by members of the political community [a far more general group than just authoritative decision-makers] as meriting public attention and as involving matters within the legitimate jurisdiction of existing governmental authority'.¹⁹

What I wish to argue is, first, that the General Assembly's treatment of apartheid to 1984 had little impact on the *formal* agenda of the world community regarding South Africa; that is to say, the appeal to primarily Western governments for mandatory economic and other sanctions *by them* against the Republic did not gain significantly wider acceptance. But I want to argue, secondly, that it did have considerable impact upon the world's *systemic* agenda such that, at the end of our period, international public opinion had clearly come to identify South African apartheid as an outcast social order and the regime itself as a moral leper. Thus unanimous or near-unanimous resolutions of the General Assembly after 1970 (I am thinking, for example, of the resolutions regarding 'Bantustans', or African 'homelands', in South Africa, political prisoners, the 1983 South African constitution, authorization for a world conference on sanctions against South Africa, or an international campaign of information against apartheid) while not themselves productive of *direct pressure* on the Pretoria regime, have nonetheless cumulatively helped build a climate of world-wide opinion regarding the Republic. And one needs to look no further than the daily newspaper in 1986 to see that this climate is decidedly negative and hostile towards that country's official leadership.

The long-run significance of this, as Cobb and Elder themselves point out, is that enhanced systemic agenda status commonly *precedes* improved formal agenda position. Once 'the mass public becomes involved with an issue', they write, 'the response from the system is almost reflexive; decision-makers automatically place the issue on the governmental agenda'.²⁰ Thus France's decision at the Security Council during the summer of 1985 to support a compulsory ending of foreign investments in South Africa, dramatically reversing decades of French opposition to such a step, may well have been prepared gradually over many years by the seemingly 'inconsequential' votes we have cited, though the decision itself was clearly sparked by Pretoria's declaration of a state of emergency in certain areas of the country in July and surely owed much to the specific context of French domestic politics at the time.

The appreciation of the Special Committee Against Apartheid of the possibility of such a causal link is obvious. In its 1979 annual report the Committee urged the United Nations to launch an international campaign 'to mobilize world opinion' on behalf of total sanctions against South Africa, and

19. Cobb and Elder, *Participation in American Politics*, p. 85.

20. Cobb and Elder, *Participation in American Politics*, p. 157.



thereby 'dissuade Governments and transnational corporations from further collaboration' with the Republic. And four years later the Special Committee pleaded again for a 'mobilization' of public opinion and encouragement of public action in support of the efforts of the United Nations [against apartheid].²¹

My contention therefore is that the very one-sidedness of General Assembly votes on such matters as those cited above does signify an enhanced standing for the apartheid issue on the global systemic agenda, a result referred to in the agenda-building literature as 'issue expansion'. The votes over the years have doubtless themselves contributed to this end, as well as having also reflected it, but the writing of Cobb and Elder suggest two other explanations: the *simplification* of individual issues that in the present case, with the proliferation of anti-apartheid resolutions in the General Assembly after 1970, resulted in a higher saliency for apartheid as a term (like Watergate) summarizing a system as a whole, and the power of 'triggering devices', that is, unforeseen events such as the Sharpeville killings in 1960, to focus public attentions in particularly compelling ways.²²

Validation of the latter point is seemingly suggested not only by 'Sharpeville' and the 1985 French 'turn-about' cited above, but also by the short-term drop in 1977, following the Soweto disturbances the year before, in the number of General Assembly votes opposed to a ban on foreign investments to South Africa (16 votes to 5 in one year). A similar temporary decrease occurred in 1980 in the number of UN members prepared to resist General Assembly condemnation of nuclear collaboration with South Africa just a year after evidence suddenly appeared (later deemed inconclusive) suggesting that a nuclear explosion could have taken place over the ocean south of Cape Town on 22 September 1979.

But if a majority in the General Assembly has gradually succeeded in de-legitimizing the South African regime at the level of the world's systemic agenda (a resolution [3411 (XXX)] declaring the South African government 'illegitimate' did in fact pass the Assembly in December 1975 by a vote of 101-15-16), there is another side. The growing stridency of the rhetoric of this effort, coupled with a recent tendency on the part of the Assembly majority to 'indict' by name other states who are allegedly collaborating with South Africa (particularly Israel and the United States), has concurrently constrained this campaign at the level of the formal agenda, as indeed the 1975 vote cited above itself documents. This behaviour might be understood to indicate a readiness on the part of the Assembly's majority to try to appeal 'over the heads' of 'offending' governments, directly to their respective

21. *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1979 (New York), p. 172; United Nations, *General Assembly—Official Records: Thirty-Eighth Session Supplement No. 22 (A/38/22)*, 1983 (New York), p. 51.

22. Cobb and Elder, *Participation in American Politics*, pp. 98-100.

electorates in the hope of out-manoeuvring these regimes politically with their own domestic constituencies. Language in recent annual reports of the Special Committee Against Apartheid, some of which is cited above, in fact hints at such a brash strategy. But a more compelling explanation is that this rhetoric, which is typically heavy with symbolism, has as its principal goal the *affirmation* (to employ again Cobb and Elder's terminology) of the unity, solidarity, commitment and indeed morale of the *existing* anti-apartheid majority in the General Assembly.²³ For the fact of the matter is that nearly four decades after the question of apartheid was first raised in the General Assembly, there is still not a great deal to show *concretely* for the efforts that have been made since 1946 to undermine that policy, though clearly there has been some progress, such as the arms embargo.

The question that features prominently in the world press as these words are being written is whether or not the domestic policy 'log jam' in South Africa that has substantially endured within that country also since the late 1940s is now about to break up. Should it do so, would this reinforce or perhaps lessen General Assembly shrillness on future resolutions of South African policy? The 'affirmation' explanation of recent rhetorical and tactical 'excesses' that have functionally restricted further (and critical) issue expansion of this matter in the past would seem to suggest the latter. On the other hand, the practices of decades in the General Assembly may well have produced habits of international behaviour that could prove difficult to break, even when the arena of discussion has become mainly, or most importantly, that of an 'in-house' formal agenda.

23. Cobb and Elder, *Participation in American Politics*, p. 149.

DEVELOPMENT IN KENYA: DROUGHT, DESERTIFICATION AND FOOD SCARCITY

RICHARD HOGG

THIS ARTICLE IS ABOUT the effects of development on desertification in two pastoral areas of Kenya. I argue that desertification in both areas has been largely caused by ill-conceived development, which has encouraged population and livestock concentration and, in particular, the growth of villages and towns. This development is a result of a government policy which emphasizes settlement (in the interests of national unity) and agriculture (to increase food production and to combat desertification)¹ rather than pastoral nomadism. Any solution to the problem of desertification depends on a reversal of this policy and a clear commitment to the principles of nomadic pastoralism.

Desertification

The notion of a progressive deterioration in the world's drylands achieved prominence after the Sahel Drought of the late 1960s and early 1970s and the United Nations Conference on Desertification in Nairobi in 1977. The term 'desertification', meaning an intensification of desert-like conditions and a decline in biological productivity, achieved widespread publicity. As much as 30 per cent of the world's land surface and 14 per cent of the world's population was reported to be at risk.² National and international resources, it was then hoped, would be mustered to combat the menace, and the United Nations put forward an ambitious plan of action.

Yet, in spite of some ameliorative action, such as rural afforestation schemes, bans on charcoal production, soil conservation works and animal grazing restrictions, desertification, and the losses in food productivity which it entails, continues unabated. Africa is just as much at risk from the consequences of drought now as it was ten years ago. Emergency food aid continues to fill the gap between local production and demand. At the beginning of 1984 the United Nations Secretary-General called for massive food aid to the drought stricken Sahel countries of West Africa and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) approved

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1. The objectives of agricultural development in arid areas in Kenya were stated in a recent FAO/UNDP report as: to develop food production potential; to provide an opportunity for destitute nomads to lead a more stable and prosperous life; and to offset the destructive effects of the continuous encroachment of the desert. See H. Arundale, *Report on Irrigation in Arid Regions of Kenya* (UNDP project KEN/78/018 E/01/12, mimeographed, 1978).

2. *Report of the United Nations Conference on Desertification* (A/CONF.74/36, 1977).

almost \$33 million of additional food aid for Somalia, Chad, Mozambique, Rwanda, Ghana, São Thome and Principe and Cape Verde. According to the Director of the Agency, at least 20 African countries were then suffering from widespread food crisis.³

One of the main reasons why development planners have, I suggest, failed to arrest the decline of food production in marginal areas is that they have failed to address the fundamental political and economic processes which cause desertification. Instead, they have perpetuated the idea that desertification is largely an ecological problem. Yet it is probable that desertification in Kenya, for example, might be more effectively halted by canvassing politicians and policy makers in Nairobi than nagging pastoralists to mend their land use practices.

According to the Kenya country position paper presented to the United Nations Conference on Desertification in 1977, '[o]vergrazing due to improper livestock and range management is one of the principal causes of desertification in Kenya. . .'. In order to combat overstocking and overgrazing it was proposed that 'the entire range should be developed, conserved and managed in accordance with ecological principles of proper land use. . .'.⁴

While the proposal is laudable, the authors of the paper mistake the symptoms of desertification for the causes. There is no reason to believe that the Kenyan pastoralist, left to himself, does not, in the main, pursue ecological principles of proper land use. The widely held notion of the 'Tragedy of the Commons' is a caricature of actual pastoralist behaviour and of pastoralist land use practices in general.⁵ However, the pastoralists' ability to pursue these principles is increasingly restricted by outside intervention. Talk of average stocking rates, in particular, conceals fundamental and permanent changes in the distribution of stock in relation to people in recent years, and generalizations about overstocking and overgrazing ignore dramatic discontinuities in rangeland use (quite apart from the permanent alienation of rangeland to other uses). Large areas of rangeland in Kenya, for example, are now permanently deserted of stock and people, while quite small areas are densely stocked and settled. The problem for development planners may therefore be not so much to destock the range but how to achieve a more equitable distribution of stock, not only over the range itself but between rich and poor households.

To illustrate some of the political and economic processes involved in desertification I examine below two pastoral areas of Northern Kenya, Turkana and Isiolo Districts.

3. *Kenya Times*, 14 January 1984.

4. Republic of Kenya, *Kenya's Experience in Combating Desertification* (Nairobi: National Environment Secretariat, 1977), p. 5.

5. For a recent criticism of the notion, see J. L. Gilles and K. Jamtgaard, 'Overgrazing in Pastoral Areas: the commons reconsidered', *Nomadic Peoples*, no. 10 (April 1982), pp. 1-10.

Turkana District

Turkana District in North-West Kenya covers an area of 62,500 sq km, most of which is arid. Average annual rainfall in the plains is about 300–400 mm falling to less than 150 mm in central desert regions. The mountains receive 600 mm above 1200 metres. The vegetation of the district is sparse, except on the higher mountain slopes and along the banks of the two main semi-permanent rivers, the Turkwell and Kerio, which are forested (see Map 1).

The Turkana, who are mainly camel, small stock and cattle herders, have been subject to considerable change in recent years. During the colonial period the district was administered as a 'closed' district, and the Turkana were largely protected from outside influences. This policy, which was common to the arid lands of Kenya and Uganda, has been succinctly expressed by Sir Geoffrey Archer, one time Officer-in-Charge of the Northern Frontier District:

There is only one way to treat these Northern Territories, the home of nomadic camel, cattle, and sheep owning people, and that is to give them what protection we can under the British flag and, otherwise, to leave them to their own customs, as far as possible, and under their own chiefs. Anything else is certainly uneconomic . . .⁶

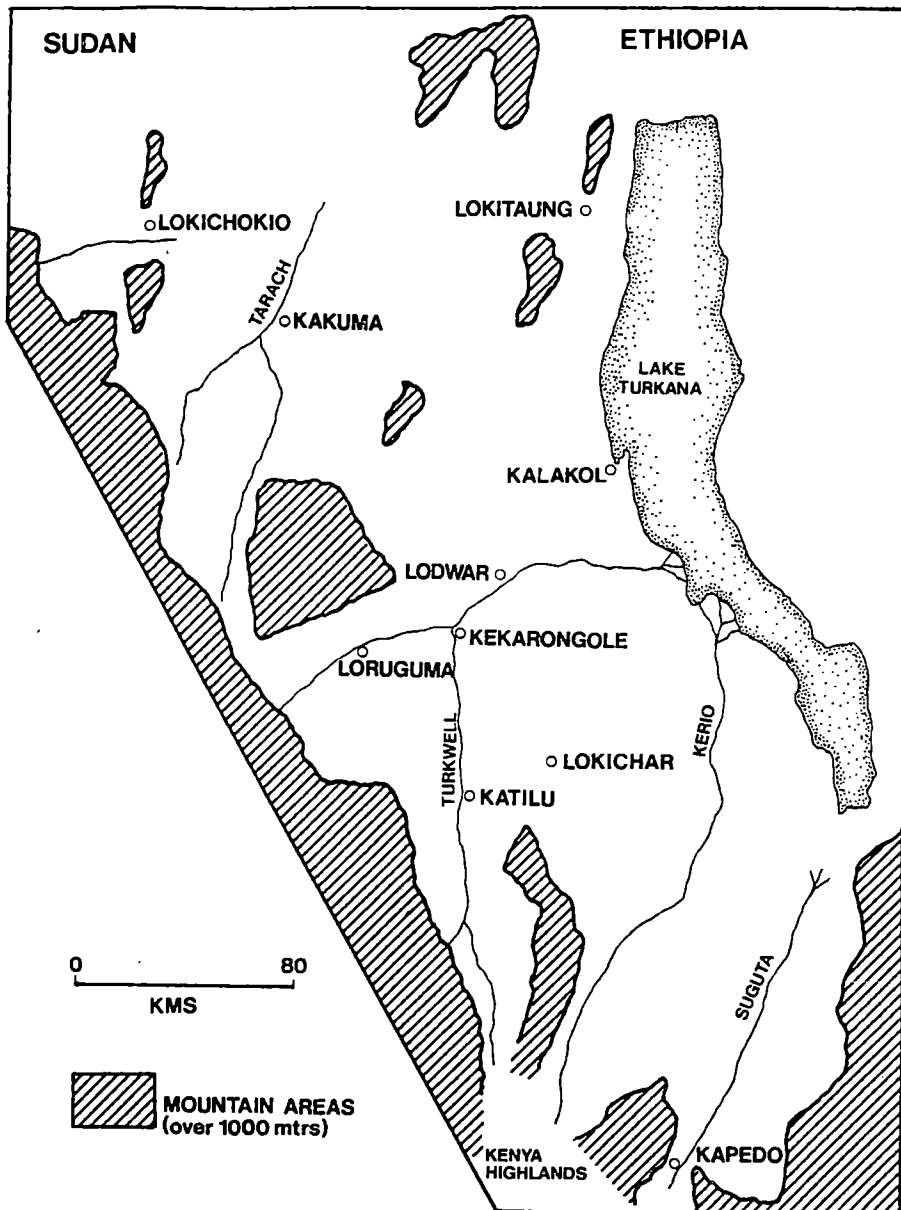
Effectively this meant that the administration pursued a 'laissez-faire' policy within the district while restricting the movement of people across the district borders. Since Independence, however, all such restrictions have been lifted and the government has been keen to incorporate the district (and other similar districts) more fully into Kenya. This emphasis on the rapid development of the semi-arid and arid lands has meant the development in Turkana District of an infrastructure, such as roads, hospitals and schools, and the settlement of destitutes at irrigation schemes and along the shores of Lake Turkana. Since the mid-1960s large numbers of Turkana have been settled at irrigation schemes along the Turkwell and, later, Kerio Rivers. By 1980 about 4,500 were settled at irrigation schemes and a further 12,000 as fishermen along the Lake Shore.⁷

The general effect of this settlement policy has been not only to concentrate development resources in agriculture and fisheries rather than live-stock, but to concentrate population into villages and towns. This has further exacerbated the more general shift of population in recent years

6. Quoted in J. P. Barber, *Imperial Frontier: a study of relations between the British and the pastoral tribes of North-East Uganda* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1968), p. 209.

7. Republic of Kenya, *Kenya's Experience in Combating Desertification*. The Turkana Rehabilitation Programme (TRP), which was established in 1980 to rehabilitate destitute Turkana, recently proposed a massive expansion of irrigation agriculture along the Turkwell and Kerio Rivers.

TURKANA DISTRICT : MAP 1



towards the heartland of the district because of livestock raiding in border areas,⁸ to a point where only half of the district was occupied in 1982,⁹ and towards permanent settlement because of food relief. In late 1984 some 11,000 families out of a total population of 169,400 were on food relief (some three years after the 1979–80 famine). Most of these families, who are involved in a food-for-work programme, live close to permanent settlements: in the Ecosystems survey 46 per cent of the population lived within 5 km of permanent settlements.

Such is the concentration of people and livestock in the district that large areas, including some of the best grazing lands, are deserted and ungrazed. This has led in certain places, especially in the south because of the danger of Pokot raiding parties, to the invasion of former grassland by bush. Conant reports similar 'green desertification' of the adjoining Masol area of West Pokot District as a result of livestock raiding.¹⁰

The obverse of 'green desertification' in sparsely populated areas is deforestation and overgrazing in areas of population concentration. The cutting of trees for firewood and charcoal burning, house building, even for fodder in the dry season, is widespread and increasing. Nearly all the towns and irrigation schemes in the district have zones of deforestation which may extend upwards of 5 km or even further from their centres. Such was the seriousness of tree cutting along the new tarmac road to Lodwar that the District Commissioner had to ban the export of charcoal from the district. Yet such bans attack the symptoms rather than the root causes of forest clearance, which are poverty, settlement and modernization.

Poverty is a root cause because many Turkana who have lost their livestock depend on charcoal burning and/or firewood collection for their livelihood; settlement is a root cause because many of the relief camps and all the irrigation schemes are sited in, or near to, forested areas along the semi-permanent rivers of the district; and modernization is a root cause because of changes in styles of house building. One need only look at the lower Turkwell area after the recent drought of 1979–80 where a large number of relief camps were established along the river. What was previously a largely dry season grazing area became an area of permanent settlement. At Kekarongale, to take another instance, in an area of 8 sq km the population increased from about 1,000 to 3,000 in less than one year. As a result, traditional controls on the cutting of trees for firewood/

8. Livestock raiding, or 'Ngoroko-ism', is widespread in border areas. In recent years the rustlers have acquired sophisticated automatic weapons, so raiding has become an increasingly lethal activity involving large numbers of men.

9. Republic of Kenya, *Turkana District Resources Survey Draft Report* (Nairobi: Ministry of Energy and Regional Development, 1983), vol. II. This information is from an aerial survey carried out by Ecosystems in November 1982.

10. F. Conant, 'Thorns Paired, Sharply Recurred: cultural controls and rangeland quality in East Africa', in B. Spooner and H. S. Mann (eds), *Desertification and Development: dryland ecology in social perspective* (London: Academic Press, 1982).

charcoal, garden clearing, fodder for animals and house building poles were insufficient to prevent widespread forest destruction.

The example of Kekarongale can be repeated elsewhere. At Kalakol, the settlement of large numbers of Turkana on the Lake shore as fishermen has resulted in the virtual disappearance of doulm palms from the shoreline. At Katilu, the largest of the irrigation schemes along the Turkwell, the authors of a recent report on the scheme have written that there 'has been a heavy pressure on the natural resources (as a result of a large concentration of people and stock in a small area) and an accelerated breakdown of regulative means of resource control'.¹¹

Government cannot attack the causes of forest destruction and localized overgrazing unless it is prepared to re-appraise its development policies in the district. It is relatively easy to construct roads, primary schools, dispensaries, even irrigation schemes, but a great deal less easy to cope with the population concentration which results. The establishment of static services in an environment where mobility is at a premium is ultimately destructive of local resources and the full and productive utilization of the land.

If sustained economic development is to be achieved in Turkana land, then planners must attack as a priority the continued concentration of people both in and near to permanent settlements. As a pre-condition for such an attack government must re-assess its security operations in the district, and move from a policy of 'fixed' to 'mobile' policing, if necessary through a return to foot patrols in the bush. Planners for their part must realize that neither irrigation agriculture nor fishing can sustain the majority of the population, and that a concerted effort should be made to move people back into the pastoral sector. This is sensible policy not only because it would relieve the pressure in areas of high population concentration but also because it would re-colonize large areas of rangeland which are susceptible to deterioration as a result of 'understocking'. Effectively this strategy requires some form of stock distribution to enable families depending on food relief to move away from the camps. If planners wait for the Turkana to re-stock themselves, at a rate perhaps of one goat every two months, then they are effectively abetting the process of range deterioration.

Development in Turkana land has done little to improve local self-sufficiency. Rather, it has increased the people's dependence on outsiders and, in particular, the national government. Fishing at the Lake has provided a livelihood for many destitutes, but at the cost of dependence on outside markets; few fish are sold in Turkana district. Irrigation agriculture has achieved even less. At the Katilu scheme the average farmer's

11. V. Broche-Due and F. Storås, *The Fields of the Foe: a socio-anthropological study of household economy at Katilu Irrigation Scheme, Turkana* (NORAD, 1983, unpublished), p. 280.

income from his cash and subsistence crops is insufficient to support him and his family. Farmers invest more time in their traditional rain-fed sorghum plots next to the scheme than they do in the scheme itself. Yet the cost of the scheme, when measured against production, is extravagant. The scheme largely survives because of external inputs of money and skilled manpower.

If development has done little to improve local self-sufficiency, it has considerably increased the pace of sedentarization. The result is an environment under increasing threat.

Isiolo District

In Isiolo District, as amongst the Turkana, the lifting of colonial restrictions on inter-district movement has been followed by a vigorous attempt on the part of government to expand elements of permanent infrastructure, such as schools, dispensaries and communications. Recently completed projects are the Garba Tulla telephone exchange, a bridge across the Ewaso River at Malka Dakaa, a dispensary at Gafarsa (and others nearing completion at Iresa Boru and Dadacha Lata), and a new primary school at Mado Gashe. Yet projects intended to boost the livestock sector have languished, and district food security is no better now, probably a lot worse, than twenty years ago.

Isiolo District covers an area of 25,000 sq km, and much the largest part is inhabited by Boran pastoralists (see Map 2). The district is roughly bisected by the Ewaso Nyiro River, a semi-permanent river in its lower reaches. To the north rainfall ranges from about 200–300 mm annually, and in the south from about 300–500 mm, so that the district falls into the arid and very arid ecological zones. The population of the district is just over 43,000, of which Boran number over 21,000. The population density is 1 per sq km.

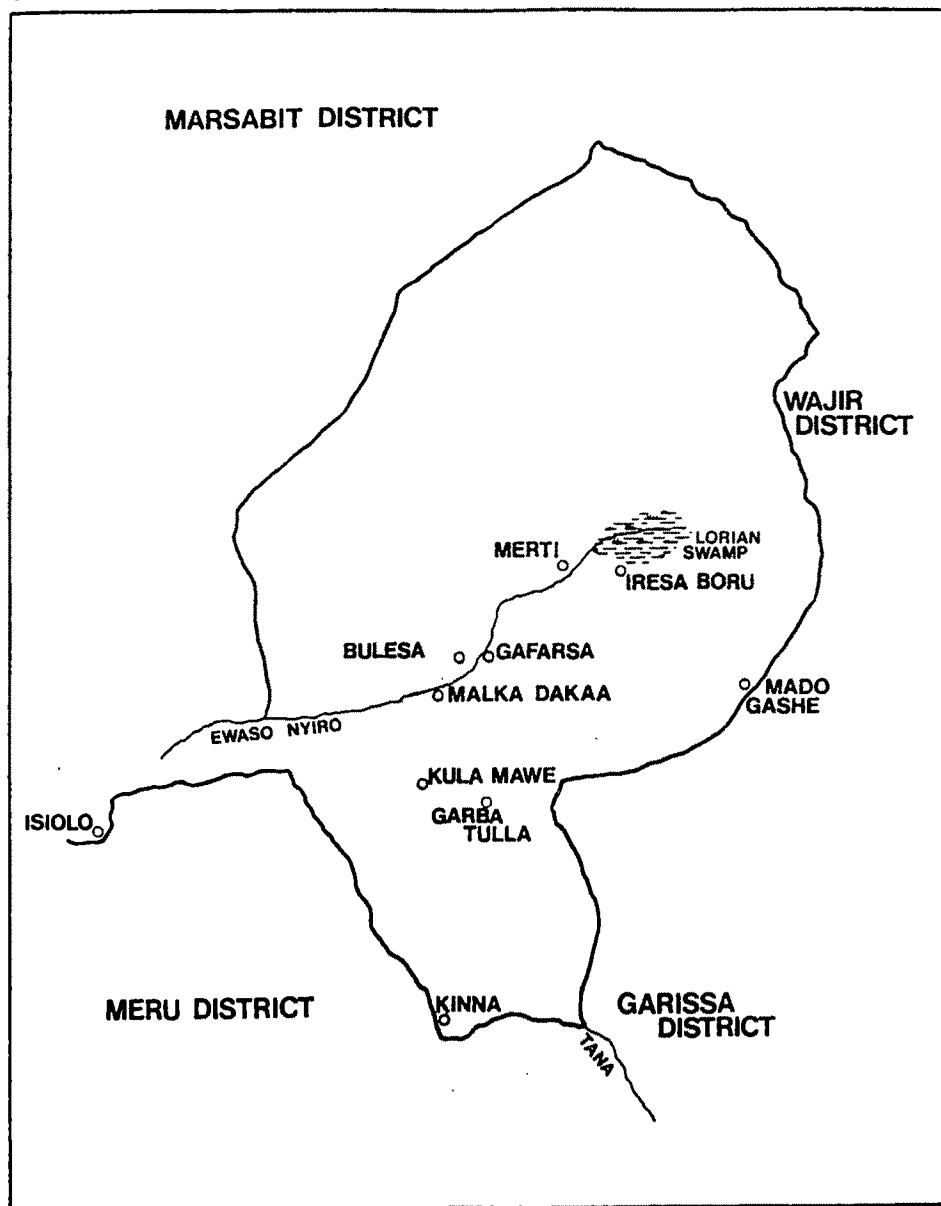
Boran used to herd camels, cattle and smallstock, but in the mid-1960s and early 1970s their herds were devastated by war,¹² disease and drought, and many Boran lost their entire livelihood. Between 1963 and 1970 the camel population declined by over 95 per cent from 200,000 to 6,000, the small-stock population by over 90 per cent from 500,000 to 38,000, and the cattle population by about 7 per cent from 150,000 to 1400.¹³

The response of government and relief organizations was to distribute famine relief and to establish small scale irrigation schemes to provide a new way of life to destitute pastoralists. These developments were reflected in a

12. Boran were involved in the *Shifita* border conflict between Somalia and Kenya in the 1960s.

13. *Range Development in Isiolo District* (Nairobi: UNDP Rangeland Surveys Kenya, AGP: SF/KEN II, Working Paper 9, 1971). The cattle population saw a further decline (40 per cent) in the 1970s as a result of three long periods of drought.

ISIOLO DISTRICT : MAP 2



population shift from the pastoral areas to the urban centres, such as Garba Tulla, Merti and Mado Gashe, where famine relief could be obtained, and to the Ewaso River, a traditional dry season grazing area, where irrigation schemes, primary schools, and medical dispensaries were established. The vacuum created by Boran departure from outlying livestock areas was partly filled by Somali pastoralists moving in from Garissa and Wajir Districts.

Today Boran are concentrated near to the Ewaso River, or to the south, around such local towns as Kulamawe, Garba Tulla and Kinna. This distribution of population is partly the result of poverty, partly the result of the concentration of government services such as primary schools, dispensaries and police posts along the river and in the local towns, and partly because of lack of security. As Somali pastoralists have infiltrated into the district (as a result of the lifting of colonial restrictions on inter-district movement) there has been a considerable upsurge of *Shifita* (bandit) activity. Such is the intensity of this activity that Boran fear to go too far from the river. As a result Boran have effectively lost a significant portion of their wet season grazing land and are increasingly squeezed against the river. Government and donor agencies have done little to arrest, let alone reverse, this process. Indeed, their interventions have only encouraged more of the same. Wherever Boran have congregated, shops, primary schools, dispensaries, and police posts have followed, creating permanent settlements and, eventually, small towns. The result is deforestation along the river and the extension of the desert margin into once important dry season grazing areas.

The Lorian Swamp, for example, which begins some 25 km downstream of Merti, now supports a permanent population of pastoralists. At Iresa Boru, on the southern edge of the Swamp, there is now a primary school, shops and a medical dispensary. Around the centre, extending upwards of 6-7 km, there is a dense concentration of settlements. As a result there are few remaining trees. In the last ten years or so most of the trees have been cut down for the fencing of cattle and smallstock enclosures. In the dry season the area is windswept and dusty and increasingly takes on the appearance of a true desert.

Yet many of the pastoralists who live around Iresa Boru cannot afford to move. A large number of the young and middle aged men are away in wage labour in distant towns, and the children may be away at school, so the swamp provides easy watering and grazing for the few who remain at home to herd the cattle and smallstock. In addition, maize meal bought from the nearby shops provides a much needed supplement to diet, as few families have sufficient animals to depend on milk alone. The richer pastoralists prefer to stay away from the swamps in the wet season but the poorer ones depend on it all the year round. They are trapped by their relative poverty, and when the swamp dries up, as it did in 1980, they are usually the last to move their animals away.

Settlers at the irrigation schemes face an equally bleak future. At Malka Dakaa, which was established in 1976 at considerable cost,¹⁴ food production has been steadily declining in the last few years. The scheme had no money to run the pumps and tractors, even to pay the staff, and the prospects of more money were poor. The farmers who were settled at the scheme, and who were supposed to be self-sufficient, were on food relief. Farmland lay unused and windswept, and large tracts of forest had been cut down in anticipation of an expansion which never came. The settlers, like many of those at Iresa Boru, were trapped. While some have left the scheme, many find it difficult to give up food relief.

Development in Isiolo District has done little to improve the standard of living of the majority of Boran. The older generation recognize this, and hark back to the colonial period when they were protected from Somali incursions and yet were left largely alone to get on with their affairs within the district. The younger generation of educated Boran see things differently. They complain that during the colonial period Boran were kept back from improving themselves. Progress for them is a matter of catching up with 'down-country' agricultural people and is measured in terms of the number of schools, hospitals and shops built. Yet, while progress in these terms has been substantial since Independence, local food security and self-sufficiency has declined and environmental degradation increased.

Comment

Both Turkana and Boran pastoralists have suffered considerable economic dislocation in recent years. While they have suffered dislocation in the past as a result of drought and disease, recent food crises have come at a time of increasing government intervention. Government is now concerned to extend not only the benefits but the duties of citizenship to all Kenyans. The pastoral tribes of the north of the country are no exception. What this has meant in practice is the extension of services and facilities available in the more developed agricultural parts of the country to the pastoral north and an attempt to increase food production through settlement and agriculture. In the event of drought and famine, for instance, destitutes are collected together into relief camps for the ease of emergency food distribution, then embarked on a food-for-work programme, and finally settled down to farm at quickly established irrigation schemes. Little thought is given by planners to the appropriateness of farming or settlement in that particular area, nor indeed to the consequences of their interventions on the local environment, on settlement patterns, and on other sectors of the economy.

14. According to one report, the development costs of the Malka Dakaa run to nearly US \$17,000 per hectare. P. Kuester and S. Wiggins, *Proposals for Development of the Ewaso-Nyiro Irrigation Scheme Cluster* (Nairobi: Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, 1982).

Today, as a result of outside intervention, most Turkana and Boran are more, not less, vulnerable to drought. Sedentarization has meant a declining resource base and increased insecurity; and desertification, as a result of population and livestock concentration, has continued unabated and largely unchecked. If this decline is to be halted, then government and donors must make a positive commitment to the importance of pastoral nomadism. Every effort should be made to encourage mobility and maintain full utilization of the rangeland. Security should be achieved through intensive patrolling of vulnerable areas. Above all, efforts should be made to achieve a more equitable distribution of stock between households by buying stock at local markets to distribute to poor families.

Such a programme as I have outlined above represents a radical departure from hitherto tried and implemented development programmes in arid areas. But these programmes have not been noted for their particular success in increasing either livestock productivity in pastoral areas or general food security among the people as a whole. The latest food crisis in the Sahel countries of West Africa is but the latest evidence of this failure. All too often, it is assumed that destitution represents a 'natural' process of adjustment to carrying capacity. But this argument seems not only unduly harsh on the poor pastoralist but seriously flawed.

First, overstocking on the range is more often than not asserted rather than proved. Rarely is the question of what precisely constitutes overstocking and overgrazing discussed in any detail, nor is the subjectivity of assessments of 'carrying capacity' often admitted.¹⁵ Stocking rates, for instance, are frequently worked out on the basis of inaccurate livestock population figures, and 'carrying capacity' expressed as a single value (the number of livestock per hectare) without allowance for different animal feeding habits and seasonal fluctuations in fodder availability.¹⁶

Second, while droughts are a recurrent feature of marginal semi-arid environments, their consequences for the local population vary. These consequences, I suspect, are most severe as a result not of the degree of livestock and population increase, but of the degree of external interventions which restrict mobility and cut off important grazing lands.

Third, destitution among pastoralists often has little to do with drought induced livestock deaths, but more to do with disease epizootics, raiding and even passive involvement in war.

Fourth, in most of the areas which pastoralists occupy there are no real economic alternatives to livestock herding. Much money has been, and continues to be, invested in irrigation agriculture, but irrigation agriculture

15. An exception is the UNEP/MAB Integrated Project in Arid Lands (IPAL) study of Marsabit District, Kenya.

16. For a critique of the use of 'carrying capacity' by ecologists, see A. Hjort, 'A Critique of "Ecological" Models of Pastoral Land Use', *Nomadic Peoples*, no. 10 (April 1982), pp. 11-27.

is best used, where it is possible at all, as a supplement rather than an alternative to pastoralism.¹⁷

Fifth, leaving rangeland understocked may be just as harmful as leaving it overstocked. For a start, grass which is unused means potential milk and meat lost to the pastoralist; but it also means range degradation through the invasion of bush. This may be just as serious for long-term range productivity as desertification itself.

Sixth, by not re-stocking, development planners may be effectively abetting the build-up of residential flocks and herds and local over-grazing around permanent settlements. This could possibly be avoided by the planned distribution of viable flocks, which would allow families to move away from relief camps, missions, and trade centres, sooner rather than later.

Finally, a re-stocking programme need not mean an increase in the local livestock population. Rather, it would mean a re-distribution of livestock from wealthier to poorer households. The implementation of such a programme would therefore not affect average stocking rates but would enable poor families to escape 'ghetto-ization' in camps, irrigation schemes and towns.

Increasingly, as large scale pastoral development projects become discredited, planners will have to turn to modest programmes which rely for their success not on expensive external inputs and bureaucratic management but on local resources, knowledge and management skills.

Conclusion

I have attempted to show in this article that desertification cannot be discussed in ecological terms alone, but must be viewed in a wider political and economic context. In particular, desertification may be just the ecological outcome of what is fundamentally a political process (that is, the incorporation of pastoralists into nation states), and the major emphasis of research should be on the process and effects of this incorporation on population distribution, settlement patterns and livestock herding rather than on desertification as such. In a sense, desertification as it has been presented in the media and elsewhere is a diversion from the real problem of coming to grips with the effects of development and market integration on pastoral societies.

17. See R. S. Hogg, 'Irrigation Agriculture and Pastoral Development: a lesson from Kenya', *Development and Change*, 14 (1983), pp. 577-591.

WHY THE ANUFO DO NOT EAT FROGMEAT: THE IMPORTANCE OF TABOO-MAKING FOR DEVELOPMENT WORK

JON P. KIRBY

TABOOS AND THE aetiological myths that occasionally accompany them, explaining them and elaborating their social context, are more than repositories of the values and beliefs of a culture, or collections of colourful lore. Even more than proverbs, genealogies, idealized histories and other folklore, taboos and their explanatory myths, when taken in a total context, are strategies for living. One might say they are 'not good to eat' but good to live. However, since the constraints put upon communal behaviour by taboos are not perceived as being practical, economical, or instrumental in effecting a sound ecology, but are rather seen as part of the irrational genre of the magico-religious, they are seldom seriously explored by development theorists.

It is the purpose of this paper to show that taboo-making has its own logic in promoting and balancing the total human environment within a cultural system, and that sometimes new taboos arise in response to serious imbalances within social and environmental structures. I will analyse the explanatory text accompanying a recent prohibition against the eating of frogmeat among the Anufo of Northern Ghana showing how the prohibition relates to recent changes in their society. But first I will briefly trace some inter-related anthropological ideas about myth, ritual and taboo.

Myth ritual and taboo

The interests of anthropologists have shifted over the years in terms of certain recurrent themes regarding the relationships between taboo, myth and ritual. Frazer and Robertson-Smith saw ritual as antecedent to myth, and Durkheim vice-versa, while subsequent theorists continued to place themselves at various points along this scale until quite recently. Another general theme in the understanding of myth and ritual emphasized the 'functional unit' of everything that a society does. For Malinowski and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, myth is a 'charter' for proper conduct, and one need not look beyond surface relations and primary biological needs for its interpretation.¹ Gradually, anthropologists came to recognize the place

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1. Bronislaw Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (New York, Harpers, 1922). A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, 'On the Concept of Function in Social Sciences', *American Anthropologist* 17 (1935).

of change in such systems. Firth and Leach stressed the conflicts of social interests rather than their harmonization in society. For them 'tales are divisive, not unitive . . . and may not be so much a reflection of the social structure'.²

Anthropologists also became more influenced by the psychoanalytic movement, and began to see human behaviour as functional in a symbolic sense. For Cassirer myth is the abstracted patterning of social structure into symbols.³ The role of anthropologists is to use their training and knowledge of archetypes to cypher the allegorical meaning of these symbols. Thus Jungian psychology was introduced to anthropology. This allegorical mode and insights into conflict and change helped T. O. Beidelman to produce his analysis of the Kaguru animal tale in which he interprets the existence of two types of Kaguru—one good and one bad (i.e. a witch)—in terms of the conflict-ridden structure of matrilineal relations there.⁴ Allegory reached new heights with V. Turner's polysemic symbols. The *mukula* plant not only had referents in the botanical sphere but also the symbolic spheres including puberty, circumcision, childbirth and hunting.⁵ In Turner, the logic of symbolism is both transcultural and very rational. This new trend is further emphasized and indigenized in Eric ten Raa's analysis of Sandawe solar mythology, in which myths and ritual practices are made sense of in terms of Sandawe cognization.⁶ Jack Goody adds another patch to the pastiche with his analysis of the Bagre myth. Here myth and ritual become fixed genres. The reciter conflates the original event with the present enactment of it, thereby suggesting a certain precedence of the myth over the ritual. An evolutionary process is envisaged whereby, through the performances over time, the original story is continually embellished in the light of contemporary circumstances and events.

The two most important contributions of Levi-Strauss for my purposes here are that myths are not to be understood individually, but in relation to other myths, and that they must be tested by ethnography (i.e. contextualized). But one of the major drawbacks of the structuralist method is its inherent bias against human creativity. Levi-Strauss says that 'Myths think themselves in men' showing that men have rather little to say in the matter.⁷ Isidore Okpewho counters this position by stressing that aesthetics are at the heart of the matter. For him the important thing is

Raymond W. Firth, *History and traditions of Tikopia* (Macmillan, 1961), pp. 75–79

2. Checking—single book ref to be inserted at proof.

3. Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man* (New York, Anchor Doubleday, 1954), p. 108.

4. T. O. Beidelman, 'Hyena and Rabbit: a Kaguru representation of matrilineal relations', *Africa* 31 (1961), pp. 61–74 (1961).

5. V. W. Turner, *The Forest of Symbols: aspects of Ndembu ritual* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1967), pp. 10–11.

6. Eric ten raa, 'The Moon as a Symbol of Life and Fertility in Sandawe Thought', *Africa* 39, 1669, pp. 24–53 (1969).

7. Levi-Strauss quoted in I. Okpewho, *Myth in Africa* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 273.

'fanciful play'. Myth is 'simply that quality of fancy which informs the creative or configurative powers of the human mind in varying degrees of intensity'.

Using Okpewho's standard, our taboo-related narrative below is certainly well within the boundaries of myth. In our analysis of this mythic taboo, we will make use of the insights outlined here: the modifications in the functionalist approach to accommodate the notions of change and conflict, the polysemic nature of symbolism in reference to their allegorical meanings, the importance of context, worldview and cognition processes of the actor, and the creative poetic license of the culture itself, which seems to be key in myth-making. Now we will add to this some essential notions of taboo.

Franz Steiner's insight that taboos are not so much to prevent dangers as to identify them and to classify them, gives us our starting point for interpretation. Danger regarding power roles is put into focus, classified and controlled by taboo-making. Thus taboo-making is 'danger behaviour' in a general sense.⁸ For what is tabooed does not relate to a single problem but to all that respond to the polysemic symbolism operative.

Mary Douglas expands on Steiner's discovery and provides us with our task at hand. Noting that taboos most often deal with polluting relations, she comes to the conclusion that taboos make order out of chaos which is variously symbolized by 'dirt', 'untidy experience' and 'polluting fluids'. She stresses that taboos or 'pollution rules' only make sense in the total context or structure of thought, that they probably change in dynamic relation to changes within society and that they function both instrumentally and expressively, though the overarching expressive function is more important. She says: 'Primitives are not trying to cure or prevent personal neuroses by their public rituals'. The main purpose is that '... in giving these relations visible expression they enable people to know their society';⁹ then, in knowing the problems, uniform action can be evoked to deal with them.

This Anufo case study¹⁰ will serve as a complement and test to Mary Douglas' theory that taboos 'are sensitive to change'. She says, 'The same impulse to improve order which brings them into existence can be imposed to continually modify or enrich them'.¹¹

The myth and its context

The object of our analysis is a dietary prohibition and concomitant myth described to me in the following words:¹²

Franz Steiner, *Taboo* (Cohen and West, 1956), p. 147.

8. Checking—single book reference to be inserted at proof.

9. Mary Douglas, *Purity and pollution: an analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo* (Routledge, 1966), p. 5.

10. My research among the Anufo extended from 1976–1981.

11. Mary Douglas, *Purity and pollution*, p. 5.

12. Everyone in the village knew the story and several repeated it for me. But those in the surrounding villages did not, nor did they taboo frog.

Long ago the people of Gbalo used to eat frogmeat. We ate them almost every day. There were plenty of them in a stream near the village. One day the men did not go for the frogs but went far into the 'bush' to hunt and they came back very late without anything. As usual they sat down in the compound and ate the food brought before them. One of them remarked about the meat in the soup: 'What is this meat and where did it come from'. One of the women answered: 'it is frogmeat. You were too long and did not bring any meat, so I went to the bathroom and gathered them up.' [There are always plenty of toads in the bathing places because of the moisture there.] Immediately the men began to vomit up the toads they had eaten. [The very idea of eating toad is incredibly repulsive to the Anufo. Should a toad even jump into a cooking fire, the place must be ritually purified before any further cooking can be done. Chicken is to vulture as frog is to toad.] Then the old man stood up and swore an oath that no one should ever again eat frogmeat. This is why we do not eat frogmeat.

Before interpreting this narrative, some initial observations must be made: (1) It may be safely assumed that the real reason for the prohibition is probably quite different from that given in the narrative, simply because it is unimaginable that anyone in Anufo society could actually mistake a toad for a frog. We are therefore dealing with symbolic figures rather than with real ones. (2) The narrative is quite unique in that it seems to be a fairly new prohibition. Adults can remember when they were allowed to eat frog which suggests that it is set within a still observable context. It may be assumed that the present socio-environmental context of the Anufo, therefore, affords the key to its interpretation.

It will be suggested here that neither frogs nor toads are the key issue, but rather the rules governing the relationship of 'house' to 'bush' and those regulating the division of labour. These rules, when taken within the context of the changing relations of production and domestic relations, will guide our interpretation. Ostensibly, the narrative has nothing to do with the 'bush' or Anufo ecology, and only peripherally mentions the roles of women in relation to those of the men, but, as we shall see, changing roles amid a changing ecology are recurrent themes in the much larger problem network with which the frog/toad narrative deals directly.

To accomplish this we will look at various aspects of Anufo life in change—the social structure, land tenure systems, rules of ownership, ways of organizing and assigning labour, and economic production—first from the way society idealizes these relations, and then as they are now, noting some factors which mediate the changes. Then we will concentrate on how these changing structures affect one another, i.e. how changing domestic relations affect the economic, and vice-versa. Finally, we will attempt to

explain our mythic prohibition in terms of these economic, domestic and political imbalances, noting the instrumental and expressive roles of the taboo/myth and pointing out possible applications for development planning.

Ideally, all village land is owned jointly by the kin-group whether or not they are living in the same compound. Kin-groups are usually of one patronymic group which identifies with a major household in Sansanne Mango,¹³ in northern Togo. All of the land belonging to a village is under the ritual jurisdiction of the 'Earth Priest' (*miefo*). Although 'fo' means owner, the office is more a custodianship and is non-utilitarian. Each of the household heads (*awulufobiem*) claim rights over their own sections of the land and its usufruct. The members of each kin-group may farm and hunt on their own land, but do not own it as a corporate group, and certainly not as individuals. These are structures derived from their acephalous Komba and Konkomba¹⁴ forefathers.

Similarly, rights over other kinds of property—household goods, domestic animals, clothing, utility goods, and even guns—in the past extended more to their use than to the thing itself. There was little one could call possessions of any sort. Until the 1950s men wore little more than a loin-cloth and women wore simply a waistband with a bunch of leaves tied in front and behind. Men might have had a cotton smock for market attendance or for special occasions, and women might 'dress up' with a yard of woven cotton cloth. Traditionally a man's only private possession was a goatskin bag, while women owned only a few earthenware bowls and cookware. Although both men and women could own domestic stock—cows, sheep and chickens—and raise them separately from the herds of the kin-group, in a situation of common need they would be made available to the household heads for the good of all, and without thought of reimbursement.

In Northern Ghana the relations of production cannot be considered separately from domestic relations. The Anufo extended household is the locus of production as well as reproduction, in what is a largely subsistence economy. The smallest unit of labour co-extensive with a household subsection (*jisa*) is called '*tukpo ano*' (lit. hoeblade mouth). It consists of one or more uterine brothers and their wives and children. One compound (*dika*) may be composed of several of these labour units. Each sub-section farms separately and manages its own granaries but provides the compound head with labour, whenever he requests it, and a token portion of the crop. On the village level, compounds belonging to one kin-group share resources

13. Sansanne Mango (lit. 'camp' of Mango) is the capital of the Anufo people located in northern Togo. It was founded in the late 18th century by the original group of Anufo raiders from 'Ano' in central Ivory Coast near present day Prikro.

14. For a description of the Konkomba social structure see D. Tait, in J. Goody (ed.) *The Konkomba of Northern Ghana* (International African Institute, 1961).

such as yam seeds and sacrificial animals, and they exchange labour. Labour parties are organized by the elders to work on the land belonging to each of the compounds in the village successively. All the farming which is deemed important for the common good, the hoeing-up of ridges, the heaping-up of yam mounds, and later, the weeding of the sorghum, maize and millet during the six-week bottleneck at the beginning of the rainy season, is done communally. Each compound contributes an equal number of men for these work parties, which form but one of many patterns of reciprocal obligations and benefits. Activities that can be spread over a longer period of time, e.g. routine weeding and harvesting, are done separately by each compound.

Communal labour is also organized for marginal crops or cash crops by individuals for their private needs when the corporate needs of the village and household have been met. As will be seen, this is becoming increasingly popular with a new breed of young male entrepreneurs and with women. The work groups of men are usually gathered by age (*salafu*) but the women's groups enlist women of all ages from different households, and at times even incorporate husbands and sons.

All produce, including the 'private' stock of uterine brothers, theoretically belongs to the household heads who act on behalf of the members of their compounds, and could be demanded in a dire emergency, though I have never recorded an incident of it. But it was traditional for women to keep the surplus production of certain crops which they helped to produce and process. They bought and sold these commodities quite independently of the household economies controlled by the elders. These crops include 'hunger rice' or fonio (*Digitaria exilis*) and vegetables (*tolo*) (lit. 'soup') used in preparing the sauces which complement the pounded yam or porridge staples.

Fonio is the only West African food which can be stored for more than a few growing seasons and has been known to keep for up to 20 years. It was thus a kind of subsistence level capital and an insurance against poor years. 'A house with fonio is secure', the Anufo say. This cereal was also perhaps the first domesticated crop of the area for its position in first fruits rituals, fertility rites and those of the guardian spirits is at least primary, if not primal.¹⁵

Besides the raising of their own vegetables for market or for household use, women do not engage in large scale farming, but rather do most of the food processing—the cleaning, grinding and general preparation. However, women take an active part in the planting, weeding, harvesting and processing of fonio, and it is perhaps therefore more 'theirs' than any of the

15. After the fonio crop is harvested, work time is over and 'play' time begins. From the first serious agricultural work in April until the first harvest any explicit sign of merriment in the compounds (e.g. blowing flutes, storytelling, dancing, etc.) is strictly forbidden.

other major crops. Just as the guinea fowl is characterized as a woman's animal, fonio is a woman's cereal. The surplus stock of fonio is given to the women of the compound each successful year for them to sell in the market¹⁶ or to exchange for cloth or cooking utensils and pots which are then owned by them.

Changing patterns

Over the last two decades, there has been a tendency toward the privatization of previously shared resources. Although this has occurred in both the male and female dominated sectors of production, due to the traditional conventions, a disproportionate part of the resources have accrued to women. This has caused major disruptions in traditional social patterns, tensions in the household and market place, and has seriously threatened both ritual and political institutions. Two major factors can be identified here:

(1) The tremendous influx of goods which come under the general category of cookware, domestic articles and women's clothing, together with the freedom in commerce, which has been traditionally given to women, has, in effect, put them in control of great stores of capital goods and most of the commerce.

(2) Struggles among the male population to re-define the hierarchical levels of authority and prestige have tended to make the natural influence which mothers have over their daughters a major economic and political tool.

Because of the great increase in manufactured goods, especially enamel bowls, metal pots, basins etc., and the array of clothing and accessories that have been made available in the major markets of the area over the last two decades, women have tended to stockpile those goods and have begun to spend more and more of their time in trading. To get a stake, some have also increased their efforts in private farming of their traditional crops of fonio and vegetables. This entrepreneurialism has resulted in less time and labour spent on household chores and farmlands where they would normally take part in the sowing and harvesting of the crops. The fact that some foods and other items (such as groundnut oil, shea-butter, soap and fuel for lamps) which formerly were laboriously processed in the home by women, are now available in the markets or from entrepreneurs, has meant that: (1) women spend less time in and around the compounds (where there are many other small tasks needing their attention and where they are under the watchful eyes of the men), (2) women spend more time in the markets and (3) women are free to convert the results of their labour from communal property to private property. For these changes there are no precedents.

16. By 'market place' I refer to the actual location of exchange. In Chereponi, where the research was carried out, the major market days are every six days.

The increase in manufactured goods available from local markets has also affected the production levels of the men, but it has not greatly affected the distribution process. Farming inputs, fertilizers, new hoe-blades and consumer goods such as bicycles, clothing, radios and tape-recorders are still regarded as at least semi-communal and, depending on seniority, may easily be commandeered. However, over the last ten years there has been a limited privatization of such goods as they have become plentiful in the compounds.

There have been changes in land use, property ownership and labour. More land is being farmed by both women and young men for cash. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s there was a steady increase in cotton, rice and maize production, but a drop in traditional food-crop production. Cash-cropping, especially of cotton has severely depleted the soil in many places. But, in spite of their efforts, the farmers received very little actual profit because of the rampant inflation during this period. By the mid-seventies, the soaring food costs forced the farmers to return to growing staples on their now exhausted land.

But whereas formerly everything was held in common, now there is a limited private ownership access to which favours women rather than men. In the case of the men, consumer goods are owned communally and may be used or even sold by the elders for the common good. But in the case of the women, the traditional pattern of owning their own cloth and cooking utensils has opened the way for unlimited and undisputed private ownership as long as the commodities fall within these broad categories.

In addition to spending more time on their own farms than on those of the household, young men migrate to the large yam farms in central Ghana each year to sell their labour. The cash from the increased productivity and migratory labour goes into both the semi-privately owned consumer goods, which can be requisitioned if need be, and communally owned property such as grinding mills, tractors, iron roofing sheets, etc. Although such migrations have occurred since colonial times, the migrants have not been as numerous nor have they stayed away for as long a period as they do now. Women tend to benefit disproportionately from communal acquisitions, because by definition these commodities either promote entrepreneurial activity or aid domestic services, especially food processing activities. These aids enable the women to spend more time in entrepreneurial activities acquiring goods for themselves.

Effects of changing domestic and economic relations on each other

Changing economic factors have brought about changes in domestic roles and in the marriage institutions of the Anufo. Bridewealth has decreased in importance while the collection of trousseau has established itself.

Besides stockpiling commodities for themselves, mothers have begun to

do so for their daughters as well. They do this primarily through the customs adopted from the Muslim Hausas of collecting a trousseau (*furu*) for their daughters. This practice grew quite naturally out of the Anufo concept of 'kulubi money' (*kulubi nwa*) which is the monetary part of the bride-wealth which, as a whole, is meant to replace the services that a girl would give her mother and father if she were to stay with them. Almost all women are betrothed as infants to households rather than to specific individuals, and the main prestations of labour, firewood, and, in some cases cows, extend over a long period of time and involve many reciprocal obligations and duties called 'sibeya'.

But the term 'kulubi money' is ambiguous. It is increasingly being applied to the money and prestations, which were formerly only symbolic, given to a young girl and her mother by the girl's lover, or to money given to a girl for sexual relations (also called 'daali nwa' or 'sleeping money'); not to the prestations given to the household. It is this non-household money that is used for the trousseau. Lover relationships between girls of 14-18 and young men, other than from the kin-group to which the girls are betrothed, are sanctioned by Anufo families during the annual celebrations at the end of Ramadan called 'kulubi'. It is possible that the celebration of this 'feast of the maidens' was originally a strategy for extending alliances between the houses of Nobles (*donzom*) and the Commoners (*njem*). The creation of such temporary affinal links would have been extremely important for the raiding upon which their livelihood depended. Until the colonial era, the Anufo did not farm but subsisted entirely on tribute and booty extorted from the local inhabitants. Although they were not empire builders, they loosely controlled, through raiding, a vast area from Fada and Gurma in the north to Blitta in the south with Mampursi and Dagbon to the west and Dahomey to the east.

Giving and receiving women also marked relative social status. During the three days of 'kulubi' celebrations rituals of etiquette and deference fixed relative social statuses between the contracting parties and confirmed 'estate'¹⁷ hierarchies. Among the true Anufo of Sansanne Mango, by means of the 'le ano jue' (entrance hall song), the client kin-groups of Commoners used to sing the praises of the Noble 'houses' from whom they received the token bride, 'kubitere', while, later, by means of the 'corpse name' chants (*fui duma*), the patron 'house' confirmed its Noble pedigree through genealogical recitations.

But today on the Ghana side of the border, the dynamics of the *kulubi* celebrations are quite different. In a previous work,¹⁸ it has been

17. In their tri-partite 'estate' system, the chiefly estate (*donzom*) who rode horses and 'carried spears and pistols into battle, controlled the human booty, slaves, while the Commoners (*njem*) were footsoldiers and carried away the livestock and other valuables.

18. Kirby, J. P. *God, Shrines and Problem-solving among the Anufo of Northern Ghana*, St Augustin: Studia Instituti Anthropos, No. 34, 1985.

demonstrated how the Anufo people of Nalori (the Anufo territory in present day Ghana), had been, in pre-colonial times, Kombas who were made a subservient class to both Commoners and Nobles in Sansanne Mango. However, once the Anufoized ex-slave Kombas of Nalori had been separated from their masters at S. Mango by the colonial intervention,¹⁹ and were no longer compelled to send tribute or to demonstrate their junior status ritually, they began to manufacture their own Noble and Commoner titles and jostle for relative status among themselves. Soon they became richer than the original Nobles and Commoners in S. Mango and they began to manipulate sumptuary law to gain status and prestige. They had themselves carried in hammocks, and, if they were far enough from S. Mango, bought horses and carried pistols.

Since wife-receiving normally indicated high status or chieftaincy, rich ex-slave landlords began to compete among themselves to receive women in the *kulubi* celebrations rather than to give them, as the S. Mango Nobles would have done, to secure Commoner allies. In this way women became scarce resources flowing in the direction of money rather than power and prestige—although in the Anufo mentality, one leads to the other, i.e. 'The slave gives birth to the rich man and the rich man gives birth to the chief' (*Talaka wu fanggafo, fanggafo wu feme*).²⁰ Gradually the principal of 'bought statuses' permeated the ranks of Nalori Anufoized society and made political control and prestige a factor of economic supremacy.

Women and young men, the disenfranchized, but important interest groups of Nalori, soon began to seek control over their own surplus production for security and prestige.

By the early 1960s accumulation of private wealth among the women and young men had produced structural imbalances which were shaking the foundations of Nalori society. A vicious circle had been produced which had reverberated back to its source—the elders, who could no longer assure their sons of wives, because young girls, encouraged by their mothers, tended to elope with lovers rather than go to their betrothed husbands. Those young men who gave the most money to the mothers, whether through *kulubi* or outside this institution, stood the best chances of later arranging an elopement.²¹

As a result of this, young men must strive to acquire money outside the homestead. This money is not given to the elders of the kin-group but to the mothers of the girls sought in *kulubi*. Thus the elders suffer loss of prestige, loss of their control over the young men and their labour, loss of the

19. Nlori, the Ghanaian portion of Anufoiland, was cut off from the S. Mango portion by the 'Anglo-French International Boundary of 1920'.

20. *Feme* means 'chief'; from the Mande 'strong man' (*fangama* or *fama*, M. Delafosse, *La Langue Mandingue et ses dialectes (Malinke, Manbara, Dioula)* (Macmillan, 1955, 2 vols).

21. This has brought about an increase in the trousseau, most of which is bought with migrant labour money supplied by lovers, from two or three clay pots in the 1950s, to about £150 sterling worth of consumer goods and stock for petty trading at present.

capital produced by the labour, and, therefore, loss of communal property. However, they still bear full responsibility to support the members of their households—a responsibility which the entrepreneurial groups are not willing to share. On the other hand, the women not only receive a disproportionate share of the capital and labour resources, and control over the means of reproduction and prestige—their daughters—but are in no-wise compelled to redistribute these resources. As the fathers lose prestige and control over their daughters, more elopements occur undermining the stability of the traditional marriage system and forcing the youth to invest more of their time and money into the inherently disruptive strategy of elopement or bride-theft. These courses of action, besides undermining social structures, are in opposition to the idealized rules of the patrilineal society.

The ruling elders are shackled with ever-growing responsibilities and have ever-diminishing prospects of fulfilling them. The male dominated legal apparatus turns on the men as mothers encourage daughters to divorce their husbands at the slightest provocation, being assured of ready offers from suitors eager to arrange an elopement. The court costs revert to the men involved while the women retain their trousseaus.

As result of this, women have become considerably more independent economically and have gained in at least covert political power. They are using their newly accrued wealth and influence in new ways which go further to offset traditional balances. One interesting development among a similar people of the North (the Nabdam) is that women entrepreneurs are now acquiring their own 'wives' so that they can devote themselves full time to trading. I think that we can look forward to more such untraditional 'marriages' in Northern Ghana.

Similarly, women are taking an increasingly active role in the religious life of the community. New cults from Asante have mainly female congregations; there has been a great increase in female custodianship of personal spirit guardian shrines and some attempts by women to control divination shrines.

The internal disorder has its parallel in the ecology. The Anufo have attacked their land with the same ruthless spirit that prompted their forefathers to raid and destroy. All of this has added up to the impoverishment of the land and the people. As the land became poorer and the need for cash increased, the youth spent more time as migratory labourers in the South. Many remained there leaving elderly kinsmen to eke out a living at home.²²

22. As capital gradually became accessible to all, its control became more important than the authority of the elders. Meillassoux (1971) refers to the process as the ascendancy of the 'aristocratic' mode of production over the 'lineage' mode. It seems that the Anufoized Kombas of Nalor were in a state of transition toward the 'aristocratic' mode, just as the systems of destruction that supported it were curtailed by the Colonial regime.

Interpretation

The Anufo of S. Mango originally upset the traditional subsistence mode of production by forcing their surrounding Moba and Komba hosts to produce a surplus. Since colonial times the surplus has gone to the elders, but more recently it has increasingly gone to the young men and to the women. This is the basic insight into the changing factors regarding labour and resource distribution necessary for properly understanding the narrative.

On the symbolic side of the picture, we have mentioned that the toad is a symbol of 'dirt' and 'disorder' using Mary Douglas' terms. The most powerful medicines against witchcraft and the spirit vengeance of dangerous animals or humans demand the sacrifice and ritual consumption of toads. Yet in the non-liminal world they are considered deadly poisonous—so much so that by their merely contacting the cooking hearth, they can pollute any food cooked there.

The hearth is an important link to the domestic significance, for it symbolizes the traditional role of women. When a wife wishes to divorce her husband she does so by removing the hearth. If the marriage is to be renewed it must be done by ritually constructing a new hearth outside the compound, i.e. in the 'bush', and there preparing a ritual meal of unity. A similar ritual of renewal is performed when a hearth is 'spoiled' by a toad. The pollution of the hearth is an ever present possibility given the fact that toads hop freely throughout the compounds and their contacting the hearth is normally the first thing one would think of with respect to a toad being dangerous. Otherwise toads are merely regarded as the lowliest and most despised of compound creatures. With a little poetic license, the toad can be construed as a symbol of potential domestic disharmony.

We are now ready to attempt an explanation. The rationale goes as follows: women's place is in the house—domestic environment; not in the 'bush' where hunting is done, where meat is obtained, where the 'wild' is tamed and domesticated. Allowing women to start procuring 'wild' things for the house would be as disastrous to society as eating toad (i.e. ingesting dirt or disorder) instead of wholesome food. Indeed, this reversal would bring upon society the effects of eating toad—death. This taboo, therefore, sets off alarms regarding the moral principle of the division of labour by sex and the proportionate distribution of resources, recalling the few remaining solid foundations left, given the massive changes in Anufo society recently, the ideal of communally owned property and the cosmic division of the Anufo universe into 'house' and 'bush'—a cosmology not yet challenged by the new relations of production and distribution.

The key to our allegory is the interesting play on usefulness versus non-utility. The toad is the most useless creature; the frog is useful. Yet they resemble one another. Mistaking something which is useless or potentially harmful for something that is beneficial because of outward similarities is

what the elders feel women are doing. The elders are saying that women are not in a position to understand what is good for society and their mistaken priorities will destroy it.

The frog-toad theme is more than a simple camouflage used by a powerful interest group, the men, to gain popular support for their own policies. Nor should it be considered simply an adaptive strategy of pouring new wine into old skins, for it is not concerned with accommodating disruptive changes, but with recalling and alerting the Anufo to central issues of mutual identity even while society is changing; so that, as Mary Douglas says, all concerned may be able to see the problems more clearly.

The narrative carries as its symbolic load the complexity and the inherent danger of a manifestly simple confusion in the division of labour and the assignment of roles. But the source is a generalized, internal, contradictory condition of which the incident in the narration is only one manifestation. The prohibition counteracts the breach at the core rather than on any peripheral level, for it reorganizes the men and women involved along the lines of the challenged principles of lineage responsibility, the authority of the elders, and, finally, the authority of the ancestors themselves.²³ The object here is not to turn the clock back but to return to the timeless premisses of Anufo society fancifully represented. The object is not to take power from the women but to exhort its communal use.

In terms of the process of establishing harmonious power relations between the sexes, the frog-toad mythic prohibition raises some important questions for Western culture. I can hear the applause from the women's section at the resourcefulness of the Nalori women entrepreneurs, for it is assumed that such a step is a liberating one, for the women at least. Yet the Anufo elders warn of the impending breakdown of a society in which everyone—men, women and children will surely suffer. One thing is for certain to all men and women in Gbalo: they all believe that a harmonious balance must be maintained, and that conditions unfavourable to one group will, ultimately, prove unfavourable to the other. We, in the West, might well ask whether or not our own society has achieved a harmonious balance in sex roles before we begin exporting them to African peoples.

Importance for development planning

I hope that it is clearer now that cross cultural epistemological concerns are far more important for development work than has been recognized thus far. The vision of what to 'develop' into is more important, in a primary sense, than the tools and strategies needed to reach that goal—though, of

23. Rattray mentions that taboos (*akyi wadie*) are those things not only forbidden by the ancestors, but are things forbidden by men precisely because of their relationship to the ancestors, e.g. the Bosommuru clan taboo the python, not because of some favourable relationship with that animal but because it 'is a mythical spirit ancestor' R. S. Rattray, *Ashanti* (Oxford University Press, 1923) p. 49.

course, all are necessary. This is the 'expressive' function of Mary Douglas, but it is not to deny any concomitant instrumentality in tabooing frogmeat. However, absenting the possibility that an increased frog population might disadvantageously affect the inset population, there seems to be no immediate biological economy at work here. Rather, their importance here, *even at the instrumental level*, seems to be in assigning identity. It thus offers a kind of emergency therapy. We have an apparently impractical taboo, which, when viewed in its total cultural frame, actually seeks to re-orient society to deeper common values—quite a practical goal in a time of identity crisis.

Mary Douglas has written that 'The analysis of ritual symbolism cannot begin until we recognize ritual as an attempt to create and maintain a particular culture, a particular set of assumptions by which experience is controlled' (1966: 128). We are dealing with such an attempt to re-establish the criteria of experience here. We sometimes think of Africa's development problems of poverty, hunger, disease, and environmental degradation as factors of low GNP and ignorance—a condition which can best be relieved with liberal doses of Western technology, know-how and more production. But the social structural imbalances I've been describing among the Anufo are rather created by rapid changes toward modernization. This particular problem, at least, needs a native cure. If the development task has been characterized as 'getting them to *want* what they *need*', our point in this paper has been to show that the inverse of this proposition is equally important: 'getting *ourselves* to perceive as needed what they want'. This means taking a better look at what they want and why, from their perspective, not ours.

The central importance of taboos and related myths for developers, then, lies in the clues they offer to how the problem is viewed and solved by the peoples in need of 'development'. This perspective is essential for molding our Western tools and planning to match the unseen dimensions of some difficult cultural problems.

Postscript

The Ghanaian government along with UNICEF, WHO, CIDA and others is now sponsoring programmes which support the development of entrepreneurial groups, especially among Northern women. I hope that our meddling with myths has helped us to understand that the success of such programmes is severely limited not only by the various practical matters—questions of infrastructure, management, and logistics—but even more so to the extent that they may conjure up the fanciful notion of eating toad.

NOT ALWAYS SO PLACID A PLACE: BOTSWANA UNDER ATTACK

RICHARD DALE

OVER THE PAST two decades there has been increasing interest in the twin fields of South African regional policy and security policy. This has been reflected in the literature and in the programmes of research institutes inside South Africa, notably the Institute of Strategic Studies of the University of Pretoria. The focal point of this concern is usually the South African Defence Force (SADF) and its projection of power into neighbouring states, on the one hand, and its primacy of place within the South African body politic on the other hand. Two recent studies of the SADF, which have used the terms 'Pretoria's praetorians' and the 'militarization of South African politics', attest to the centrality of military and security considerations in contemporary South Africa.¹

The most notable development in South Africa's relations with her neighbours has been military destabilization; indeed, one British scholar has observed that the 'destabilization of her neighbours has become one of the most important and persistent South African concerns since 1978'.² The concept destabilization has been somewhat loosely used, but it clearly embraces attempts by an outside power to affect internal politics through encouraging, by various means, both military and economic forces likely to reduce that country's political stability. The objects of South Africa's destabilizing actions have been Angola, Mozambique, Lesotho and Zimbabwe, with an emphasis upon regional organizations (such as the Constellation of Southern African States or the Southern African Development Coordination Conference, SADCC) which reinforce, or detract from, South African hegemony, and upon dissident elements or movements in these four states that could serve as proxies for South Africa. Botswana, however, has no armed dissidents comparable to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR or RENAMO), the Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA), or the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU). This has not insulated it

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1. Philip Frankel, *Pretoria's Praetorians: civil-military relations in South Africa* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984); Kenneth W. Grundy, *The Militarization of South African Politics* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1986).

2. Christopher Coker, 'South Africa: a new military role in southern Africa, 1969-82', in Robert Jaster (ed.), *Southern Africa: regional security problems and prospects* (Adelphi Library No. 14) (Aldershot, Gower, 1985), p. 145.

from the turbulences in neighbouring countries; the arrival of ZAPU loyalists from the Matabeleland area of Zimbabwe as refugees, together with ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo's rapid flight to Botswana en route for London, soured the relationship between Botswana and Zimbabwe. It took three years after the independence of Zimbabwe for these Commonwealth neighbours to establish resident High Commissioners in Harare and Gaborone.³ More numerous, and currently of greater significance, are the refugees from the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Whether, and in what form, South Africa might intervene in Botswana became a major concern in the early 1980s. My article has been prompted both by the visible gaps in the current literature on the security in southern Africa, especially the relations between South Africa and Botswana, and by what the popular press (drawing upon a famous title of one of Alistair MacLean's novels) has termed 'the guns of Gaborone', that is, the South African strike into Botswana on 14 June 1985.⁴ This most obvious form of intervention came in the wake not only of the 1984 Nkomati Accord between South Africa and Mozambique but also of attempts, ultimately unsuccessful, to persuade Botswana into signing a similar non-aggression pact, which provides the starting point for my analysis of recent South Africa/Botswana relations.

The elusive non-aggression pact

The least coercive instrument the South African Government used to ensure its primacy of place among its neighbours in Southern Africa has been the non-aggression pact. This essentially formal and legalistic device comports well with the traditions of Pretoria's Department of Foreign Affairs and Information but less so with the policies of neighbouring countries. Because the majority-ruled, internationally recognized African states have refused to legitimize apartheid, separate development, or any other political system that permits white minority rule, and are committed to the dismantling of that system to ensure that Africans in South Africa receive political power commensurate with their majority status in the country, they look askance at any formal links with South Africa. With the exception of Malawi, they have not exchanged resident ambassadors with South Africa.⁵

3. Richard Hodder-Williams, *Conflict in Zimbabwe: the Matabele problem* (Conflict Studies No. 151; London, Institute for the Study of Conflict, 1983), pp. 7, 13, 18; André Viljoen, 'Refugee Trickle is now a Stream', *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg), 6 March 1983.

4. For example, Stephen Terblanche, 'ANC was ready to strike today . . . so Army struck first: the guns of Gaborone', *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg), 16 June 1985.

5. As Robert M. Price observed, 'Until [the 1984] Lusaka and Nkomati [Accords], African states had not granted that South Africa had any legitimate security interests with respect to the political movements that sought an end to racial rule. They had viewed the military as well as the political actions of these movements as acts of liberation, not aggression'. 'Creating New Political Realities: Pretoria's drive for regional hegemony', in Gerald Bender, James Coleman and Richard Sklar, *African Crisis Areas and its Foreign Policy* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1985), p. 65.

Seen in this light, non-aggression pacts freeze the really effective activities of South African exiles based in majority-ruled states. The renunciation of force, in effect, has serious consequences for the standing of an African state relative to the continental array of states because it can be construed as cooptation by South Africa, a state whose regime of white minority rule the African states are at least rhetorically dedicated to destroy. The South African Government considered the possibility of using non-aggression pacts with neighbouring states, and Zambia and Tanzania as well, as early as 1970.⁶ It was not until 1982, however, that the first of these pacts was signed. Even then, the 1982 pact with Swaziland was kept secret for two years.⁷ The Pretoria authorities attempted to interest Lesotho, Zimbabwe, and Zambia in non-aggression pacts, but all three SADC members refused the South African offer.⁸

A month before the governments of South Africa and Mozambique signed the Accord of Nkomati on 16 March 1984, Botswana turned down a draft military accord drawn up by South Africa, asserting that it would undercut its status in black Africa and would not advance the position of blacks in South Africa. In addition, neither Botswana nor any other Front Line State attended the ceremony at Komatipoort, where Mozambique and South Africa did sign an Accord.⁹ The Nkomati Accord was debated in Botswana's Parliament later that month, where it received a hostile reception, and President Quett Masire took a disparaging view of the agreement, implying that Mozambique signed it out of relative weakness. He indicated that he did not want to see Botswana in that position.¹⁰ A senior official in President Masire's office indicated that the Botswana Minister of Foreign Affairs (Mr Archie Mogwe, who was then in Cape Town on a diplomatic mission), was unlikely to be a party to such a pact.¹¹

While on his first visit to the United States as the President of Botswana in May 1984, Dr Quett Masire told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on May 10 that his country saw no need for a non-aggression pact with South Africa. As he phrased it, '... you cannot tell someone with whom you are not fighting to sign a non-aggression pact'. Botswana, he claimed, had made it clear to the world, the Organization of African Unity, and to South Africa that Botswana would not permit the use of its territory for aggression

6. Speech of Prime Minister B. J. Vorster during the budget debate on the Prime Minister's vote. South Africa House of Assembly, *Debates*, 30, col. 4207 (15 September 1970).

7. Carole Cooper *et al.*, *Race Relations Survey, 1984* (Johannesburg, South African Institute of Race Relations, 1985), p. 838.

8. Douglas G. Anglin, 'The Nkomati Accord in Retrospect', paper prepared for delivery at the twenty-eighth annual meeting of the African Studies Association, New Orleans, 25 November 1985, pp. 3 and 28, n. 4.

9. Kitt Katzin, 'Botswana Rejects Military Pact', *Sunday Express* (Johannesburg), 2 April 1984.

10. Jasper Mortimer, 'SA Bullied Mozambique into Signing Pact', *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg) 16 March 1984.

11. 'Botswana, SA Pact "Unlikely"', *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg), 26 March 1984.

against neighbouring states; he also suggested that South Africa was applying economic pressure to Botswana and had intimated that it might station its SADF along its borders with Botswana. In his view, were Botswana to agree to such a pact, this would '... make us lose out independence since South Africa would use it as a pretext for invading Botswana'.¹²

The topic of a Nkomati-type agreement featured in the campaign leading up to Botswana's 1984 general election, held on 8 September. During it, President Masire emphasized that Botswana's policy was to ensure that its territory would not be used for attacks on any of Botswana's neighbours.¹³ At this time, the South African Foreign Minister, Mr R. F. (Pik) Botha, announced that bilateral negotiations, which involved the Botswana Police, were continuing, especially because the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) was known to be considering using Botswana as a base of operations now that Mozambique had been closed to it as a result of the Nkomati Accord.¹⁴ This was later confirmed by the South African Police, who added the proviso that the ANC's utilization of Botswana as a corridor to South Africa was done against the wishes of the Government of Botswana.¹⁵

No such caution was exercised when the South African Minister of Defence, General Magnus Malan, addressed the congress of the Transvaal National Party in early October 1984. He told its delegates that the ANC reached South Africa by way of Botswana and that the Soviets were becoming more active in Botswana.¹⁶ The Soviet presence in Botswana had been, and continues to be, a source of consternation to the South Africans; the Gaborone authorities, by contrast, responded in a manner to emphasize their belief that South Africa misperceived the situation and held unnecessary fears about the Soviet connection.¹⁷ The Soviet Union originally had a non-resident ambassador operating out of Lusaka, but then developed their own embassy in Gaborone. Their aid levels have been minimal, and it seems that they use Gaborone as a listening post. It is doubtful whether they conduct intensive espionage there, and their ambassador's 1985 offer of aid in the event of a South African attack turned out to be a hollow one.¹⁸

12. This account, including the quotation, is based upon Bishy Mmusi and Batshane Ndaba, 'Botswana Sees No Need for Peace Accord', *Daily News* (Gaborone), 14 May 1984.

13. 'We Are Not Launch Pad, says Masire', *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg), 13 August 1984.

14. *Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Daily Report, Middle East and Africa* (hereafter FBISDRMEA) 5, no. 167 (27 August 1984): U5.

15. Patrick Lawrence, 'There Is No Sanction, Says SAP: "Botswana in the Dark over ANC Raids"', *Rand Daily Mail* (Johannesburg), 5 November 1984.

16. FBISDRMEA 5, 197 (10 October 1984): U9.

17. FBISDRMEA 5, nos. 16 and 23 (24 January 1985 and 4 February 1985): U1 (for both reports).

18. Don Knowler, 'Russians Monitor SA from Botswana', *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg) 25 March 1978, 'Gaborone Spy Base Reports "Exaggerated"', *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg) 23 January 1985; and 'Soviet Diplomat Offers Military Aid', *The Botswana Guardian* (Gaborone), 1 March 1985. A principal character in one of the few novels about Botswana (Henry Kolarz's *Kalahari* [New York, Fawcett Popular Library, 1979, originally published in German in 1977]), is a KGB agent.

A principle, which Professor Polhemus terms 'the non-springboard policy',¹⁹ governs Botswana's relations with its neighbours, namely, that the Botswana Government has forbidden anybody to use its territory as a base for attack against any of its neighbours, on the one hand, and that any person found doing so would suffer the legal consequences, on the other hand. 'If any person has succeeded in acting in violation of this policy in the past', averred the Office of the President, 'it was not with the knowledge or approval of the Botswana authorities'. Furthermore, a non-aggression pact, such as the South African Government proposed, would not enable Botswana to stop 'isolated violations of Botswana's policy not to allow its territory to be used to launch attacks against its neighbours'.²⁰

Although Foreign Minister R. F. Botha indicated that Botswana was perfectly free to decline the offer of a non-aggression pact, he said that South Africa would still look after its own security and would 'take steps against acts of terrorism and sabotage being planned from neighbouring states'.²¹ Foreign Minister Botha's counterpart in Botswana, Archie Mogwe, understood the South African policy quite well, for he acknowledged that 'the mere presence of refugees in a country qualifies ... [that] country for an invasion from South Africa these days'.²² Both foreign ministers seemed to realize that to enunciate 'the non-springboard policy' was one thing and to implement it consistently, rigorously, and throughout the length of their mutual border was quite another matter. The nub comes with the enforcement of the policy, and this is a severe weakness.²³

An interlude in this diplomatic manoeuvring was provided by an exchange between government and opposition during the 1984 general election. The principal opposition party, the Botswana National Front (BNF), seemed much less hostile than the Masire government to the notion of a South African-Botswana non-aggression pact. This enraged the government, which intimated that the BNF was the cat's-paw of Pretoria. Following the election, the matter faded into obscurity.²⁴ The vigorous response of the Masire government was demonstrable evidence that it was concerned lest dissident groups be manipulated by South Africa as part of its destabilization policy. By late April 1985, however, the differences in the positions of the two governments seemed to have narrowed, with the South African Foreign Minister arriving at what each state perceived was a tolerable solution to the problem of mutual security. This understanding,

19. James H. Polhemus, 'Botswana's Role in the Liberation of Southern Africa', in *The Evolution of Modern Botswana: Politics and Rural Development in Southern Africa* (London: Rex Collings; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), p. 264.

20. FBISDRMEA 5, no. 180 (14 September 1984): U1 (for both quotations).

21. FBISDRMEA 5, no. 179 (13 September 1984): U6.

22. FBISDRMEA 5, no. 152 (5 August 1983): U1-U2.

23. Polhemus, 'Botswana's Role', p. 265.

24. 'Botswana Plea for Accord with SA', *The Citizen* (Johannesburg), 3 September 1984 and FBISDRMEA 5, nos. 175, 176, and 59 (7 September 1984, 10 September 1984, and 27 March 1985): R2, U2, and U3, respectively.



which might be designated as a tacit non-aggression pact from Pretoria's vantage point,²⁵ was shattered by the South African attack on Gaborone on 14 June 1985 and it was specifically mentioned when Botswana launched its diplomatic counteroffensive against South Africa in the United Nations Security Council a week after the raid.

The South African raid

In the early morning hours of 14 June 1985 approximately fifty heavily armed black and white South African soldiers crossed into Botswana near the Tlokweng border post which was fifteen kilometres from Gaborone.²⁶ They were transported in both vans and automobiles with bogus Botswana Government licence plates. Their mission in Gaborone was to neutralize eight houses and two offices located within a radius of twelve kilometres. These ten sites were supposedly focal points of hostile ANC planning and activity directed against South Africa.

To minimize retaliation from the Botswana Defense Force (BDF) units, the attacking force cut the telephone wires to the BDF barracks and sprinkled metal spikes on the road from those barracks to puncture the tyres of any pursuing vehicle. The raid, which began at about 1.40 am, lasted about forty minutes. In the course of their attack, the SADF demolished four houses completely and severely damaged the others. On the way back, they regrouped, put up their own roadblocks, and crossed back over the border to their military base, avoiding the roadblocks that the BDF and the Botswana Police Force (BF) had erected. The location of their base of operations, as well as the exact units to which they belonged, has not been disclosed. In the light of the security legislation and regulations affecting border areas in South Africa, such obscurity can be expected.²⁷

No South African soldiers were killed, but one was slightly wounded, apparently by his own forces because there was no exchange of fire between the SADF and Botswana's security forces. The SADF raiding party encountered only BPF personnel whom they apparently persuaded not to obstruct the SADF operation. How they managed to secure such BPF compliance is not known. In addition to destroying property supposedly used by ANC operatives, the South African commando force seized a

25. 'Southern Africa: Non-Aggression Pacts?', *ISSUP Bulletin* (Pretoria: Institute for Strategic Studies, University of Pretoria) 5/83 (16 November 1983), pp. 1, 4.

26. The most useful descriptions of the raid are *Africa Research Bulletin, Political Series* (Exeter, hereafter ARBPS) 22, no. 6 (15 July 1985): 7668 and 'South African Attack on Botswana', *Briefing Paper on Southern Africa* (London, International Defence and Aid Fund) 18 (September 1985).

27. The 1978 Defense Amendment Act permits the Minister of Defense to have access to a 10 kilometre zone along South Africa's borders, while farms along the border must be effectively occupied (Lorraine Gordon *et al.* [comp.], *Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, 1978* [Johannesburg, South African Institute of Race Relations, 1979] p. 61 and 'South Africa Imposes Rules on Border Farmers', *The New York Times*, 7 May 1983.) Such regulations might enable the SADF to establish small, clandestine, forward bases or assembly points for cross-border raids such as the 1985-1986 ones.

modest amount of arms, documents and a computer. With twelve dead and six wounded on the Botswana side, there was reason to wonder whether the BDF was adequately equipped or trained to repulse an SADF commando strike of this sort.

Could the BDF have performed more credibly on 14 June 1985 and, moreover, could it offer security to citizens, aliens and refugees alike? How accurate is Professor Weisfelder's prediction that: 'Should the BDF . . . prove only marginally effective during an assault, the blow to governmental and public morale could be severe . . .?'²⁸ Major General Mompoti Merafhe, the senior BDF officer, held a press conference four days after the SADF raid.²⁹ There had been rumours to the effect that the BDF was given advanced warning of the raid, which could possibly explain why there was no exchange of fire between the BDF and the SADF. Was there any collusion between the two armies which permitted the SADF to attack alleged ANC operatives? The answer was no, for Major General Merafhe denied that the BDF had been given such notice of the raid and stressed that it responded by closing the roads leading to and from Gaborone expecting to intercept the South African soldiers.³⁰ Moreover, the BDF felt that to engage in a firefight with the SADF in an urban area could result in even greater loss of civilian life and buildings.

He drew attention to the lengthy border between Botswana and South Africa which gave South Africa a strategic advantage because of the greater manpower resources of the SADF relative to the BDF. The BDF would have greater difficulty deploying along the lengthy border. Indeed, the thin manpower-to-space ratio had in the past concerned the Botswana Government, and it is possible that the SADF raid could provide a dramatic, if sad, reason for increasing force levels.³¹ In addition, Major General Merafhe stressed that the BDF could not be placed on constant alert status.

The BDF, he asserted, would review its techniques for handling such attacks. Perhaps he thought that such a review would forestall any investigation by either the National Assembly or by other appropriate civilian authorities. Given what appears to be a credible South African intelligence

28. Richard F. Weisfelder, 'Prospects for the Future: an evaluation of political trends and research priorities in Botswana', in Picard, *The Evolution of Modern Botswana*, p. 285.

29. Jowitt Mbongwe, 'BDF Reviews Operational Strategy', *Daily News*, 19 June 1985.

30. Simon Hirschfeldt, the Commissioner of the BPF, indicated that the Police Force was not given advanced warning of the raid by the SADF (FBISDRMEA 5, no. 117 [18 June 1985]: U1).

31. See William J. Foltz, 'The Militarization of Africa', in William J. Foltz and Henry S. Bienen (eds) *Arms and the African: Military Influences on Africa's International Relations*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1985), p. 172. The manpower-space argument originally applied to the Police Force, but it can be used with equal effectiveness by the BDF (see Richard Dale, 'The Creation and Use of the Botswana Defence Force', *The Round Table* 290 [April 1984] p. 219). Robert M. Price, ('Creating New Political Realities', p. 73) observed that 'Military destabilization forces African countries to direct large amounts of scarce government revenue and energy to the military threat posed by . . . the South African military itself'. In the case of the BDF, this is a distinct possibility.

network in Botswana, his guarded and ambiguous remarks about a review process seemed to be prudent. Indeed the South African National Intelligence Service was one of the four government departments (along with the Police and the Departments of Foreign Affairs and of Defence) which favoured the Gaborone raid.³² The public evidence suggests that the performance of the BDF during the raid did not precipitate recriminations, trigger demands for a different set of military leaders, or even give rise to threats of a military *coup*. Civilian control over the BDF remained intact, and hostility was focused upon South Africa and its SADF, not upon the BDF.

Botswana's diplomatic riposte

The Masire government quickly launched its diplomatic counter offensive on the same day as the BDF commander's press conference. Its Minister for External Affairs, Dr Gaositwe Chiepe, despatched a diplomatic note to her South African counterpart, in which she took the South African Government to task for an 'unprovoked act of aggression', for violating 'the territorial integrity of Botswana and national sovereignty of Botswana and its people'. She castigated South Africa's 'gun-boat diplomacy' and its utilization of 'hot pursuit' operations, while pointing out that, in February 1985, South Africa accepted Botswana's 'repeated assurances . . . that it does not permit its territory to be used for launching attacks against neighbouring states'. Such assurances had obviously been disregarded in the light of the SADF raid, for which Dr Chiepe demanded reparations. The amount of reparations was not specified and included two other separate bombings in Gaborone, in February and May 1985, which she claimed were the handiwork of the South African Government, although it had yet to accept responsibility for these related attacks.³³

President Masire spoke with the parliamentary leaders of the opposition about the South African raid. With their support, he was able to project a unified position to the Pretoria regime. Whatever their differences with the ruling Botswana Democratic Party, the two opposition parties in the National Assembly (Botswana National Front and the Botswana People's Party) were equally vocal in condemning the attack.³⁴ The regime in Pretoria had widespread support among its white electorate, although the opposition Progressive Federal Party (PFP) equivocated on the Gaborone raid, and the United Democratic Front and the ANC were, as expected,

32. 'We Warned Them—Pik', *The Citizen*, 15 June 1985.

33. 'Message from the Hon Dr G. K. T. Chiepe, Botswana Minister for External Affairs, to the Hon. Mr R. F. Botha, the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, on 18 June 1985', *Southern African Record* (Braamfontein: The South African Institute of International Affairs) 39 (August 1985), pp. 47–48.

34. FBISDRMEA 5, no. 119 (20 June 1985): U1 and 'Dr Masire to Meet Party Leaders', *Daily News*, 21 June 1985. The Minister of Home Affairs publicly thanked the Opposition for its support (Bpasi Mphusu, 'SA Should Respect Our Policy—Kgabo', *Daily News*, 5 August 1985).

hostile to President Botha's policy.³⁵ Both nations attempted to muster domestic support for their nations and pointed to those norms in international law which they perceived would buttress their case and undercut those of their adversary. The advantage, however, lay with Botswana primarily because of the link with the United States and United Kingdom, which can combine economic with diplomatic support. Following the raid, the Reagan administration recalled Heman Nickel, its Ambassador to Pretoria, while the British Foreign Office remonstrated with Dr Dennis Worrall, the South African Ambassador in London. Neither Western power actually broke diplomatic relations with South Africa, but the recall of Ambassador Nickel put the South Africans, so far as the United States were concerned, on notice regarding the propriety of their armed raids.³⁶

One day after the raid, President Masire indicated that his government would bring the SADF attack to the attention of the United Nations, and on 21 June 1985 the United Nations Security Council considered Botswana's charge against South Africa, with Dr Chiepe being the speaker for Botswana.³⁷ The South African Government delegate presented its interpretation of the Gaborone raid to the Security Council. In addition to Botswana and South Africa, nine other non-members of the Council were permitted to participate in the discussion without voting rights, namely, the representatives of the Special Committee against Apartheid: Bahamas, Benin, East Germany, Lesotho, Liberia, Sudan, Swaziland and Tanzania.³⁸ This was the second time that Botswana had managed to put its case before the Security Council; the previous case in 1977 involved the violation of Botswana's territorial integrity by the Rhodesian regime and was instrumental in the creation of the BDF later that year.³⁹

In her address to the Security Council, Dr Chiepe explained that for two years the Pretoria government had 'insisted' that her Government adhere to a non-aggression pact, which it refused to do on the grounds that not only would it be a derogation from Botswana's sovereignty but also that it would

35. African National Congress of South Africa Observer Mission to the United Nations, 'Statement on the Apartheid Regime's Aggression against the Independent Republic of Botswana by Alfred Nzo, Secretary-General of the ANC' (press release dated 14 June 1985); 'The Botswana Massacre: victims were very 'soft' targets', *Sechaba* (Lusaka: ANC of South Africa), August 1985, pp. 25-28; and FBISDRMEA 5, no. 115 (14 June 1985): U9-U10. Later the PFP took exception to the raid, according to 'Attack Unjustified', *Daily News*, 3 October 1985.

36. 'SA Envoys Called In', *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg), 17 June 1985. Right after the raid, a British foreign aid package was announced ('Botswana Gets 11.1m in British Aid', *Daily News*, 18 June 1985).

37. Kebabeng Solomon, 'President Calls on Nation to Remain Calm', *Daily News* 17 June 1985, and 'Botswana Takes SA to UN', *Daily News* 18 June 1985.

38. The ensuing discussion and quotations are drawn from UNSC doc. provisional S/PV. 2598 (21 June 1985), 4-19 (Botswana) and provisional S/PV. 2599 (21 June 1985), 31-36 (South Africa).

39. Details are provided in Richard Dale, 'The Loosening Connection in Anglophone Southern Africa: Botswana and the Rhodesian regime, 1965-1980', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 2, (1983) pp. 270-271.

not 'enhance our capacity to be more vigilant than we are now against guerrilla infiltration into South Africa'. She briefly underscored Botswana's policy of proscribing the importation of military weapons, noting that those who were found doing so were tried and punished with imprisonment and deportation. At the same time, she noted, Botswana also subscribed to the 1951 Geneva Convention and the 1969 OAU Convention regarding refugees and intended to continue to provide political asylum for South African refugees.

She recounted the diplomatic exchanges between South Africa and Botswana aimed at enhancing security for both states. Foreign Minister Botha had expressed his concern in January 1985 about the complaint of the Bophuthatswana Government that the Gaborone authorities were lax in their security precautions and permitted their territory to be used for aggressive purposes.⁴⁰ She claimed that South Africa threatened to retaliate were steps not taken. The matter seemed to be resolved on 22 February 1985 when Botswana repeated, and South Africa accepted, its assurances about controlling its territory. She noted that the Botswana authorities drew attention to the tremendous disparity in resources between the two nations, especially in terms of intelligence work.

At that point, Foreign Minister Botha seemed satisfied and indicated that South Africa would not insist that Botswana sign a non-aggression pact and would no longer employ economic measures against Botswana. The Gaborone government indicated its willingness to act upon South African complaints about security threats, tacitly acknowledging the effectiveness of the South African intelligence network. Dr Chiepe announced to the National Assembly that South Africa and Botswana had amicably settled the matter of security threats to South Africa without recourse to a non-aggression pact. Such a demarche, she thought, signified 'the end of the inexplicable nastiness of Pretoria's attitude towards our country', and the South African Foreign Minister suggested that a subsequent meeting be held in late June or early July. Several hours after the raid, he sent a telex message to Dr Chiepe agreeing to such a meeting on 23 July 1985.

Thus she built her Government's case around four principal points. First, there is the international legal argument, namely, 'that South Africa has violated the territorial integrity of my country with the impunity of a modern scientific Goliath'. Second, Botswana expressed its willingness to act upon information supplied by the Pretoria Government. The South African Foreign Minister is aware, she averred, 'that whenever we are given facts we follow them up until we are satisfied that no one is indeed breaking

40. 'Bophuthatswana's Tough Stand on [the] ANC: Botswana warned of "Hot Pursuit"', *The Mail* (Mafeking), 8 February 1985, reported that Botswana and Bophuthatswana authorities actually met one another and discussed the matter. Botswana does not diplomatically recognize Bophuthatswana, even though its officials do talk with those of the Tswana homeland ('Botswana Talks to Homeland', *Sunday Times*, 14 September 1982).

our laws by using our country as an 'infiltration route to South Africa'. In the third place, argued Dr Chiepe, signing a non-aggression pact is not 'a solution to the problem of security along our common border with South Africa'. Finally, Botswana would not undercut its own legal and moral obligations by 'bar[ring] our doors against victims of political circumstances'. The essence of the problem was the system of apartheid in South Africa. When that comes to an end, she declared, 'there will be no Sowetos, Uitenhages, Sharpevilles, Langas, and the rest—no more refugees scattered all over the subcontinent . . . raring to return to their country at all costs'. In closing, she asked the Security Council to insist that South Africa put aside any plans to raid Botswana, that the Security Council send a mission to ascertain how the United Nations could help Botswana to repair the damage done by the raid, and that it 'find ways of ensuring security in our region'.⁴¹

The South African definition of the situation, as presented by the South African Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr von Schirnding, was based upon international law with respect to the protection of property and persons. Thus, their case rested upon a sequence of events: attacks upon South African nationals and property launched from Botswana which were followed by SADF punitive measures. He drew attention to Foreign Minister Botha's regret for the loss of innocent lives in the raid, an important point which he claimed Dr Chiepe had not acknowledged in her presentation, and he countered that ANC activity emanating from Botswana had equally resulted in the loss of innocent lives in South Africa. In addition, von Schirnding told the Security Council that during 1984 'the ANC availed itself of its official political presence in Botswana, and by way of a secret communique to all ANC members in Botswana, placed them on full-scale armed alert and established large caches of arms and ammunition in Botswana'. This allegation is significant in that it points to an effective South African intelligence presence in Botswana, a matter referred to earlier and one which was tacitly acknowledged by the subsequent passage of security legislation in Botswana in 1986.

In particular, the South African ambassador claimed that ANC operatives in Botswana had been responsible for carrying out thirty-five violent acts inside South Africa, the loss of six lives, and damage to public and private property. He added that a large store of arms had been discovered in Gaborone, which the Botswana authorities acknowledged in late April 1985. Even though the Botswana Government permitted the ANC to have a political office in the country, the South African ambassador averred that far more than just a political office was involved. The ANC, he charged, had both intelligence and logistics operations based in Botswana. 'These facts', he submitted, 'refute the claims to refugee status made on behalf of the ANC'.

41. In his press conference, General Viljoen indicated that the SADF had eight more sites in Botswana targeted for future operations (FBISDRMEA 5, no. 115 [14 June 1985]: U7).

The South African argument thus depended upon one's perception of the term 'refugee' or 'terrorist'. In the context of his address, the terms ANC and the terrorist seemed to be synonymous. Finally, he assured the members of the Security Council that President Botha, in his remarks to Parliament two days earlier, indicated his willingness to live in peace with its neighbours provided that certain norms were observed. In particular, the South African President stressed the need for 'an unqualified prohibition on support for cross-border violence or the planning of such violence'.

Passage of the Security Council resolution (568 [1985]) on 21 June 1985 was unanimous, and there were no abstentions, or convenient absences even by the Western powers. The pattern of voting support for Botswana was geographically widely spread. Of the ten non-permanent members of the Security Council, two were Francophone African states (Burkina Faso and the Malagasy Republic), three were fellow Commonwealth members (Australia, India, and Trinidad and Tobago), one was Latin American (Peru), one was Asian (Thailand), one was Middle Eastern (Egypt), one was Western European (Denmark), while one was from the Soviet bloc (Ukrainian SSR). Praising the Botswana Government for its refugee policy, the Council resolution condemned the South African raid and insisted that South Africa pay Botswana reparations for the raid, and requested that the Secretary-General appoint a mission to ascertain the amount of damage Botswana suffered and to determine how best to help Botswana meet its security needs with regard to its refugee population.⁴²

Amid the deluge of words flowing from Gaborone, Johannesburg, New York, and Pretoria one point clearly stands out. Both sides agreed about the principle of territorial non-aggression with reference to attacks emanating from areas under Botswana's jurisdiction. There are two points in dispute. First, there is the issue of the quality, quantity, and speed with which intelligence data about South African refugees in Botswana are acquired and transmitted to the government of Botswana. Second, there is the difference in each side's definition of, and the threshold of tolerance for, dangerous activities among refugees in Botswana. Each side wants its definition and its threshold to be accepted by the other.

Consequently, the South African side invokes the principle of self-defence against externally-directed violence and provides cases to establish (and thus to prove, in their view) the link between malevolent exiles and domestic turmoil.⁴³ Botswana's inability or unwillingness to rid itself of these exiles demonstrates, in the South African view, Botswana's lack of

42. UNSC provisional doc. S/PV. 2599, 77-78 and UNSC doc. S/RES/568 (1985), 21 June 1985, final preambular par. and operative pars. 1, 5, 7, and 8. The Botswana Housing Corporation reported a final figure of P70,000 ('SA Raid Costs P70,000 in Repairs', *Daily News*, 27 June 1986).

43. FBISDRMEA 5, no. 115 (14 June 1985): U8; 'Botswana Had Been Warned', *Paratus* 36, no. 7 (July 1985), p. 21.

political willpower.⁴⁴ South Africa thus avoids coming to grips with the issue of Botswana's sovereignty. Botswana's main line of defence, however, is violation of its territorial integrity, and in its public pronouncements it tends to gloss over the precise South African allegations about exile activities and pointedly ignores South Africa's recourse to self-defence arguments.⁴⁵ Even though it may be a public dialogue of the partially deaf, it is more plausible that neither party wanted to risk public revelations regarding the strengths and weaknesses of their respective intelligence and security communities. The problem, in large measure, is that while Botswana has shown its willingness to open its territory for critics 'to come and identify the alleged bases in Botswana', such an invitation 'has not been publicly taken up'.⁴⁶

Enhancing Botswana's military and security capabilities

Botswana is rather unusual among African states in that it inherited no colonial army at the time of independence in 1966. Individuals from the former Bechuanaland Protectorate participated in Britain's two world wars, usually in non-combatant capacities, but the territory never maintained any type of standing military force. Its Police Force, especially the Police Mobile Unit, was responsible for protecting the borders with neighbouring states and territories. Such forces were not sufficient to cope with the spillover of the war into adjacent Southern Rhodesia, and the penetration and cross-border activities of various Rhodesian units prompted the inauguration of the Botswana Defence Force in 1977.⁴⁷

This force, which one journalist termed 'a flyspeck against the might of South Africa', is far too small to cover the full length and breadth of Botswana. Indeed, he argued that the strength of the BDF and the BPF should be ten times greater even 'to patrol properly'.⁴⁸ This points to a crucial tradeoff in defence economics for Botswana: how much security at the cost of how much economic growth? By 1983, with a military budget of

44. 'Political Will' Lacking in Gaborone, says Pik', *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg), 21 June 1985.

45. Dr Chiepe's speech to the United Nations Security Council, as well as a subsequent statement of the Office of the President ('Botswana "Not Told of ANC Activities"', *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg) 24 June 1985), deals with refugees in general and not with specific allegations against specific refugees, as given, for example, in 'Botswana "Activated" by ANC', p. 21. According to Stephan Terblanche ('ANC Was Ready to Strike Today') precise intelligence was gathered over a two-year period before the Gaborone targets were hit. This entailed hundreds of hours of careful surveillance, the taking of pictures, interception of ANC intelligence reports and deep infiltration of the ANC'. Such an investment in time, manpower, and resources merits a careful rebuttal in private, if not in public, discourse. The United Nations Security Council is not the optimum forum for the resolution of these very sensitive problems.

46. Polhemus, 'Botswana's Role', p. 266.

47. Background material on the military institutions of Botswana is given in David Kiyaga-Mulindwa, 'The Bechuanaland Protectorate and the Second World War', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 12, (1984) pp. 33-53 and Dale, 'The Creation and Use of the Botswana Defence Force', pp. 216-235.

48. Wilf Nussey, 'Masire Not Out to Capture Pretoria', *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg) 3 December 1981. The BDF would have a maximum distance of 3,500 kilometres to patrol along its three borders with South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia.

\$25 million, the BDF consumed 3.0 per cent of the gross national product and 7.1 per cent of the central government expenditure. Since its inception in 1977, the BDF's annual budget has expanded from \$4 million to \$25 million, although it has stabilized at the \$23–\$25 million range, beginning in 1980. From a *per capita* standpoint, military expenditures from 1977 to 1983 jumped from \$6 to \$25.⁴⁹

Like most African armies, the BDF is an infantry organization, with some small air support capability. Its infantry battalion group of 2,850 men is composed of five infantry companies, one reconnaissance company, one engineer company, and a communications, support, and logistics company. These companies can draw upon armoured reconnaissance vehicles, armoured personnel carriers, as well as 105 mm howitzers and guns, 120 mm and 84 mm mortars, and SA-7 surface-to-air missiles. The army includes an air arm of eighteen airplanes, five of which are transport aircraft, another five are counterinsurgency types, while the remaining eight are training and communications aircraft. The strength of the air unit is listed as 150 men.⁵⁰

The BDF utilizes some Soviet arms and equipment, which has elicited anxiety among the South African public. Some of the weaponry and armoured vehicles are Soviet imports, but the BDF also has American, British, and Irish made equipment in its inventory. A contingent of Indians serve as instructors for training the BDF in the use of Soviet materials. Such diversity in suppliers is common among African armies, but it can create maintenance and resupply difficulties. In terms of training, the BDF has received assistance from the British Special Air Services in the area of counterinsurgency operations and from the American army in terms of counterintelligence work and command training for its officers at the Command and General Staff College. In addition, the United States is furnishing helicopters to the BDF. The United States now has an army officer of the rank of Lieutenant Colonel attached to its embassy in Gaborone.⁵¹

The 1985 raid on Gaborone may have increased the pressure on the Government to upgrade those skills and weaponry the BDF needed to protect the nation, but it hardly started an arms race in southern Africa. Given

49. U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1985*. Publication no. 123 (Washington, DC: author, 1985), p. 55 (table 1). The dollar amounts are in constant 1982 dollars.

50. The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1985–1986* (London: IISS, 1985), p. 92.

51. These data are gleaned from Keith Kiewiet, 'Reds Aid Botswana: army carriers go on display', *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg) 9 October 1981; Norman Chandler, 'Soviet Sam Missiles on Botswana SA Border', 3 October 1982; Lloyd L. Mathews, 'Botswana', in John Keegan (ed.), *World Armies* (Detroit: 2nd ed., Gale Research Company, 1983), p. 64; and letters to the writer from Lieutenant Colonel Werner M. Zepp, Chief of the Office of Military Cooperation, US Embassy, Gaborone, dated 21 March 1986, and Major Thomas E. Conrad, Managing Editor, *Military Review*, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, dated 7 July 1986.

the type of threat it faces, the BDF seems to need specialty training rather than a large arsenal supplied by friendly powers. Foltz, for example, argued that it is the American national interest to curb the escalating sales of arms to Africa and thereby remove one impediment to African economic development.⁵²

An ominous development which seems clearly linked to the 1985 SADF attack was the passage of the 1986 National Security Act by the Botswana National Assembly. This act, which was criticized by the Botswana National Front (the leading opposition party) during the debates, imposes severe penalties for releasing classified information about the security forces to unauthorized persons. It represents an attempt to foil what appeared to be effective intelligence gathering by the South African Government, whose military forces seemed to be well informed about the location of refugees. In addition, the act does not always presume the accused to be innocent, requiring the state to prove guilt in such cases; rather, the accused bears the burden of proof of innocence. Such a legal construction struck some as far too authoritarian, far too much like the South African security statutes. This act has a profound, adverse effect upon Botswana's generally impeccable human rights reputation.⁵³

The subsequent explosion of an automobile bomb in Mochudi and of a land mine on the South African side of the border with Botswana added to, rather than dampened down, mutual hostility and suspicion. Botswana received a United Nations mission to assess the extent and amount of the damage inflicted in the Gaborone raid, but this made no impression upon the authorities in Pretoria, who showed no inclination to compensate Botswana for the property losses in the 1985 SADF raid as stipulated in the Security Council resolution. Yet bilateral talks continued in hopes of resolving mutual security issues.

This atmosphere became worse as a result of yet a second SADF raid on a cluster of five private houses one kilometre from the BDF barracks at Mogoditshane. These houses were alleged to be ANC transit sites. The attack on Mogoditshane, which is about five kilometres outside Gaborone, occurred at approximately 6.15 am on 19 May 1986. The ten minute Mogoditshane raid differed from the 1985 one in five respects. First, it entailed the use of an SADF spotter aircraft and eight helicopters, so it was less camouflaged than the first raid, which used two standard, marked SADF vehicles. The airplanes also scattered anti-ANC literature. Second, it

52. Foltz, 'The Militarization of Africa', pp. 189-193. This view is shared by the highly regarded specialist on Africa, Helen Kitchen in 'Six Misconceptions of Africa', *Washington Quarterly* 5, (Autumn 1982), p. 170.

53. Richard R. Weisfelder, 'Human Rights under Majority Rule in Southern Africa: the mote in thy brother's eye', in Claude E. Welch, Jr and Ronald I. Meltzer (eds) *Human Rights and Development in Africa*, (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1984), pp. 90-123, especially pp. 94-98.

took place at dawn, when there would be greater visibility and, presumably, greater opportunity to identify targets with care, and so to avoid the 'mis-take' of striking inappropriate targets (which Botswana had pointed out in its outrage at the 1985 attack). The SADF fired on the BDF barracks, but this time the BDF returned the fire, but without destroying any of the aircraft. Third, the loss of life was much less than earlier: one killed and three wounded (including one BDF member) on the Botswana side, with no reported casualties for the SADF. Fourth, the raid was coordinated with similar cross-border attacks that same day on alleged ANC targets in Zambia and Zimbabwe. No such strategy was used in 1985. Finally, the 1986 air assault took place during the visit of the Eminent Persons Group from the Commonwealth, a group which had visited Gaborone in late February 1986. This demonstrated even less South African concern for world and regional opinion than in 1985. The United States did not recall its ambassador to Pretoria this time, but it remonstrated by dismissing Brigadier Alexander Potgetier, the senior South African Defense Attaché in Washington. Botswana did not utilize the United Nations Security Council to mobilize world opinion against South Africa, as it had done in 1985.⁵⁴

Conclusion

As the 1985 and 1986 strikes in the urban and periurban areas of Gaborone illustrate, there is little disagreement about the nature and costs of what can be labelled 'surgical air strikes', a phrase which suggests pinpoint military accuracy.⁵⁵ In the 1985 raid the SADF attempted to sidestep that serious breach of international law by separating the target (the ANC) from the host nation (Botswana). Decoupling the two was almost certainly intended to deflect the ire of the attentive public away from South Africa and on to the refugees. If this was indeed the South African intention, the strategem failed, especially in the international arena, where Botswana was able to marshal unqualified diplomatic support. Yet did it fail altogether? There is some skimpy evidence to suggest that not all Botswana are enthusiastic about South African refugees in their midst.⁵⁶ Were this attitude to become rife, and were further ground or aerial strikes to focus this hostility on the refugees, rather than upon the SADF, then a solid case could be made for military raids as a technique for separating the target and host populations. The assumption here is that the host population importunes its

54. This synopsis is based upon the accounts in *Southern African Digest*, 23 May 1986, pp. 440 and 442; FBISDRMEA 5, nos. 96 (19 May 1986): U5, U7-U8, and U11-U13, 97 (20 May 1986): U1-U10, 98 (21 May 1986): U1-U6 and U8-U10, 99 (22 May 1986): U1-U5, 100 (23 May 1986): U1, and 101 (27 May 1986): U3; ARBPS 23, no. 5 (15 June 1986): 8073-8079; and 'Eminent Persons are in Gabarone', *Daily News* 25 February 1986.

55. See the discussion in Graham T. Allison, *The Essence of Decision: explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971), pp. 59-60 and 123-126.

56. This point was made directly to Dr Masire in the course of a local meeting (*kgotla*) a week after the 1986 raid ('Maintenance of Law, Order [Are the] Responsibility of Everyone', *Daily News*, 28 May 1986).

government to throttle the particular refugee groups which are seen as lightning rods for foreign attacks.

A second aspect of military intervention to investigate is the covert support for subversive organizations aimed at destabilizing South Africa's neighbours. Clearly, the premier examples are found in Angola and Mozambique with UNITA and RENAMO. Both can, and have, orchestrated appeals to those conservative circles which are far more attentive to Cold War typologies and idioms than to the liberation agenda of the SADCC states. In light of the publicity surrounding the Nkomati Accord, RENAMO's opening of an office in Washington DC signals that the tail may be wagging the dog and that destabilization may engender embarrassing costs to its sponsors.⁵⁷ The public record suggests that no such opportunities for subnational manipulation exist in Botswana. Ethnic fissures do exist in the Botswana polity, but they have not become sufficiently wide or resistant to central governmental largesse to present an opening for external funding, direction, or encouragement. The absence of a RENAMO-like group in Botswana, as well as the openness of the electoral system, ensures that military destabilization in the context of Botswana has to be replaced by lightning SADF attacks.

Hence, South Africa has fewer and more visible military options in Botswana relative to Mozambique, for example. SADF raids, because they are so devastating and quick, are harder to deny, harder to hide, and probably cost more in adverse overseas publicity than they are worth. Clandestine forces and the information secured through arrests, incarceration, and interrogation are probably more effective devices for handling domestic insurgency. The raids, however, have more dash than those essentially unpublicized activities and have the great domestic advantage for Pretoria's government reassuring an anxious South African public that the SADF is setting matters right. The public, in turn, shows its approval of this type of forward defence.⁵⁸

Military operations have economic consequences as well. For Botswana, funding the BDF has had to be increased over the years, and it is likely that it may become more expensive over time. Whether all such an increase can be attributed solely to SADF activity is open to debate. In the first place, the BDF has been deployed and utilized against Zimbabwe shortly after independence, as well as against SADF units operating in the Caprivi Strip-Chobe area. Second, across the continent, African armies have acquired better equipment and arms and have shown that they will utilize

57. As reported in 'News and Views from Washington', *National Security Record* (Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation), No. 91 (May, 1986), p. 4.

58. Deon J. Deldenhuys, in *What Do we Think? A Survey of White Opinion on Foreign Policy Issues, Number Two* (Johannesburg: The South African Institute of International Affairs, 1984, pp. 9-11 indicated that roughly 81 per cent of the respondents in 1981 and 1984 surveys supported cross-border strikes with the highest levels of support on the extreme right of the political spectrum.

their arms to secure national foreign policy goals. They tend to be more important, more assertive state actors.⁵⁹ It is well to remember that increased budgetary outlays for the BDF took place well before the two SADF attacks. The two SADF attacks and Anglo-American aid and training are likely to spruce up BDF *performance* levels without appreciable enlargement of *force* levels.

More important, from Botswana's perspective, however, are the costs incurred by the ingress and egress of political refugees from South Africa and, to a lesser extent, from Namibia. This problem antedates the creation of the BDF and has plagued decision-makers in both pre- and post-independence Botswana. The presence of this generally transient population group has enhanced Botswana's international prestige (because of its humane refugee policy), attracted the attention of white minority regimes (for security reasons), and has created economic burdens (involved in caring for the refugees). Some, but not all, of this burden can be borne by private and public international bodies. The control and support of refugees could be considered an indirect economic dimension of South Africa's current policies, although the cost would need to be apportioned in terms of the geographical origin of the refugee population. Except perhaps for the groups coming from Matabeleland after 1980, it would seem that the bulk of the costs (and even risks) can be traced to South African apartheid policies. Although Botswana reaffirmed its willingness to continue to accept South African refugees after the 1985 attack, they will be subject to close scrutiny and probably will be subject to some degree of economic discrimination relative to Botswana's citizens. The security dimension of Botswana's refugee policy has been reflected in the declining quality of civil liberties in the country, a trend which could be corrosive to Botswana's human rights reputation.⁶⁰

Despite the real costs and the benefits of international visibility, the most damaging effect of intervention in South Africa is yet to come. Botswana is the only one of the former High Commission Territories not to voice opposition to implementing credible, painful economic sanctions against South Africa by the Commonwealth, the United States, and the European Economic Community. In this sense, the 1985 and 1986 SADF raids were precludes to a much more expansive South African foreign policy. Should the West impose meaningful, biting sanctions against Pretoria, there is every reason to assume that Pretoria will attempt to spread the costs and distress

59. William G. Thom, 'Sub-Saharan Africa's Changing Military Capabilities', in *African Armies*, pp. 97-112.

60. This paragraph draws upon Kwapeng Modikwe, 'Botswana Will Continue to Receive Refugees', *Daily News*, 21 June 1985; Daphne Moalsi, 'BDP National Congress Calls for Tightening of Security', *Daily News*, 22 July 1985; Botswana, National Assembly, *Official Report (Hansard 70)*, 422 (26 March 1981, remarks of the Minister of Home Affairs during the second reading debate on the Employment of Non-Citizens Bill of 1981) and Weisfelder, 'Human Rights', p. 116.

among its neighbours. Botswana has had only limited experience with internationally imposed sanctions (against Southern Rhodesia) and its leadership seems committed to terminating the system of white minority rule in South Africa. Whether the West will be willing and able to ease Botswana's additional burdens remains to be seen.⁶¹ Will the 'universal admiration' that the British diplomat observed Botswana had generated be translated into universal support? This, after all, is the truly nettlesome question and the one which could abruptly terminate the debate about intervention and destabilization.

61. Botswana's sanctions policy in the context of Southern Africa is examined in Polhemus, 'Botswana's Role', pp. 254-261. See also Tony Hawkins, 'In Wake of Raids, S. Africa's Neighbours Boost Calls for Sanctions', *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg) 27 May 1986, and Gary Thatcher, 'Southern African Nations Would Feel Kick from Sanctions', *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg), 28 July 1986.

FROM HAYTER TO PARKER: AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY AT BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY, 1964–86

A. G. HOPKINS

IN OUR AGE, when men seem more than ever prone to confuse wisdom with knowledge, and knowledge with information, and to try to solve the problems of life in terms of engineering, there is coming into existence a new kind of provincialism which perhaps deserves a new name. It is a provincialism, not of space but of time; one for which history is merely the chronicle of human devices which have served their turn and been scrapped, one in which the world is the property solely of the living, a property in which the dead hold no shares. The menace of this kind of provincialism is that we can all, all peoples of the globe, be provincial together; and those who are not content to be provincials can only become hermits.¹

The New Provincialism

It has to be said that African studies tends to be crisis-prone as well as crisis-ridden, though this proclivity arises more from the nature of the subject than from the disposition of those who study it. If Africanists are sometimes inclined to take a cataclysmic view of their specialisation, it is largely because they speak for a continent which is embattled on all fronts of the human predicament.² When allowance has been made for the excesses of commitment which occasionally infuse scientific method with hyperbole, the short history of modern African studies still retains its turbulent character. At the risk of adding simplification to exaggeration, it can be suggested that the study of the continent has experienced three major crises: the trauma of birth, the anguish of youth discovering maturity, and the struggle for survival in the face of a new and implacable provincialism which threatens to impose old age before its time.

At the outset, only a generation ago, much effort had to be expended in establishing the institutional basis and academic credibility of African studies. The former was provided by acceptance of the Hayter Report of 1961;³ the latter was achieved more slowly during the 1960s by eroding the

The author is Professor of Economic History at the University of Birmingham and a former editor of the *Journal of African History* and of the *Economic History Review*.

1. T. S. Eliot, *What is a Classic?* (London, 1945), p. 30.

2. I have followed the pragmatic definitions of the terms 'Africanist' and 'African Studies' proposed by Richard Hodder-Williams in 'African Studies: back to the future', *African Affairs*, 86 (1986), pp. 593–604.

3. University Grants Committee, *Report of the Sub-Committee on Oriental, Slavonic, East European and African Studies* (London, 1961). See also J. D. Fage, 'A Decade After Hayter', *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, 28 December 1973, p. 9.

scepticism of those who thought that the subject did not exist and could not be created, and by reassuring those who feared that its appeal might prove so successful that future graduates would emerge with more knowledge of other continents than of their own country.⁴ There then followed, in the 1970s, a complex crisis of conscience and confidence among the pioneers, as their predominantly liberal and optimistic presuppositions were stubbed on the hard ground of African realities. Innocent was lost, and enquiry was sharpened by scepticism and enlarged by the new, more radical, views of a younger generation of scholars.⁵ The outcome of this difficult and sometimes incomplete meeting of minds enriched the study of Africa both by questioning newly-established answers and by suggesting novel hypotheses. By the early 1980s a degree of scholarly maturity had been achieved: large problems had been addressed from a plurality of perspectives; and the impressive, even daunting, accumulation of empirical evidence had greatly increased both knowledge and understanding.

Just at the time when a number of outstanding contributions to African studies were making their impact, across all disciplines and upon the wider scholarly community, the subject was beginning to enter what Professor Hargreaves called, as long ago as 1977, 'the present financial ice age'.⁶ Ten years later, the great glacier of education policy has moved further along its downward path and now chills even the tropics.⁷ In a world of relativities, the late 1970s evoke warm nostalgia. Today, amidst the crumbling structures of higher education, an optimist can be defined as someone who believes that the temperature cannot fall any lower. The current crisis is not only financial; it has also imposed its own legitimating ideology. Insularity is bolstered by chauvinism; philistinism is presented as cultural progress; and policy invokes the coded language of 'relevance' and 'rationalisation' in the expectation that verbal anaesthesia will dull the pain of excision. We now stand on the brink of a provincialism even more arid and comprehensive than that described by T. S. Eliot because it encompasses space as well as time, and because in its eagerness to dispose of the past it compromises our capacity to comprehend the future. The provincials of

4. On the first point see, for instance, the inaugural lectures of Professors R. A. Oliver and J. D. Fage: *African History for the Outside World* (University of London, 1964), and *On the Nature of African History* (University of Birmingham, 1965). The second issue is discussed in A. G. Hopkins, 'History at the Universities: change without decay', *History*, 54, (1969), pp. 331-7.

5. See, for example, T. O. Ranger, 'Towards a Usable African Past', in Christopher Fyfe (ed.), *African Studies Since 1945: a Tribute to Basil Davidson* (London, 1976), pp. 17-30, and A. G. Hopkins, 'Africa's Age of Improvement', *History in Africa*, 7, (1980), pp. 141-60.

6. John Hargreaves, 'Universities Must Maintain Broad Horizons', *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, 14 January 1977, p. 15.

7. See A. F. Robertson, 'Defending African Studies', *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, 7 September 1984, p. 13, and J. D. Fage, 'Where in the World Do We Go From Here?', *ibid.* 22 March 1985, p. 14.

the present have short-term memories; they understand prices but are insensitive to values; and they mistake the issue of the day for the riddle of the ages.

Accounting to Caesar

This broad context provides an occasion to look back upon a generation of scholarship. Indeed, we are all historians now if only because African studies seems to have more of a past than a future; and, when transactions have been completed, accounts can more easily be drawn. What follows is no more than a footnote in a volume that could be written upon this subject. It is confined to the record of my own specialisation, economic history, from the time when the Centre of West African Studies launched its teaching programme in 1964. Undergraduate and graduate courses in African economic history have been offered at Birmingham from that time to the present, but the concern of this essay is with PhD candidates, because the ranks of successful doctoral students supply the next generation of academics and other specialists on Africa; and, when recruitment stops, expertise declines and the subject withers.

Fourteen students have worked under my supervision since 1964. One of these has just entered his second year and for this reason is excluded from the present assessment.⁸ The remaining thirteen are nevertheless sufficient in number and range to support some generalisations about the evolution of the subject.⁹ The pattern of recruitment has followed that of the Centre as a whole, beginning slowly, reaching a peak in the late 1970s, and falling thereafter until today, when there is no first year PhD student in the field of African economic history. The overwhelming reason for the decline of new entrants during the 1980s is lack of funding. An argument can be made for the view that the subject has less appeal for students than was once the case, and this would appear to be a problem for the study of economic history in general.¹⁰ But undergraduate interest in Africa has grown rather than diminished in recent years, and applications for graduate work in African studies remained at a high level long after the onset of the ice age.

8. But he deserves to be mentioned: Said Boumedouha, from Algeria, is preparing a thesis on the Lebanese in Senegal.

9. See the Appendix to this article. I am happy to acknowledge that I have not exercised a monopoly over the subject—even in Birmingham. Theses on economic (and social) history supervised by colleagues in the Centre include: E. A. Oroge, 'The Institution of Slavery in Yorubaland with Particular Reference to the Nineteenth Century' (1971); R. J. Southall, 'Cadbury on the Gold Coast, 1907–1938: The Dilemma of the "Model Firm" in a Colonial Economy' (1975); J. F. Crisp, 'Labour Resistance and Labour Control in the Ghanaian Gold-Mining Industry, 1870–1980' (1980); L. M. Garrett, 'The Comprador on the Gold Coast: A Study of Merchant Entrepreneurs during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries' (1981); and A. O'Hear, 'An Economic History of Ilorin from c.1860' (1984).

10. R. G. Wilson and J. F. Hadwin, 'Economic and Social History at Advanced Level', *Economic History Review*, 38, (1985), pp. 548–68. The study of British history in general appears to be losing the battle against the new curriculum and the timetable in secondary schools. See David Cannadine, 'The State of British History', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 10 October 1986, p. 1139.

It is only now, when it has become apparent to potential graduate students that their chances of securing financial support are minimal, and their chances of gaining an academic post even less, that applications have fallen off. Further support for this proposition is provided by the fact that overseas applicants, with funds and better job prospects, have become relatively more important in the Centre, despite the increased fees which they have had to pay in recent years. Market economics, as applied to higher education, suggests that our expertise and indeed our 'relevance' are appreciated abroad more than they are at home, where financial constraints prevent wants from becoming effective demand.

The formal record of these thirteen students can be stated briefly. All have completed their theses and have been awarded PhD degrees. In addition to this 100 per cent success rate, the average completion time works out at just under four years, despite the fact that 11 of the 13 undertook arduous and occasionally hazardous research in Africa, as well as helping to pioneer the easier trail westwards from Chancery Lane to Kew, where the Public Record Office now has its main home. Since these indices have exercised the Economic and Social Research Council recently, and are certain to lead to more form-filling in the near future, they merit further comment.

An element of good fortune has to be acknowledged in assessing the success rate. It is unlikely that this rate could be sustained during the next twenty years and with a further thirteen students because the law of mischance would almost certainly apply to a larger group. But one explanation of the high success rate ought to be noted here because it is not readily measurable, and is therefore almost certain to be excluded from assessments of performance and the allocation of resources (following the principle that what cannot be quantified is unimportant). The explanation is that students working on African economic history have been members of a community in the Centre. They have been able to discuss their research and their problems with fellow graduates in a small building designed for human beings rather than for automatons, and they have had access to members of staff (sometimes in my absence) whose expertise on Africa exceeds my own. In these ways they have avoided the isolation which afflicts so many PhD students, and they have been able to acquire information and perspectives which no single supervisor could supply from his own resources.¹¹

Discussion of the completion time requires some mention of creative academic accounting, a subject which has already consumed so many 'free' scholarly working hours in the last decade that it deserves to become a field of graduate study in its own right, and would no doubt qualify for substantial

11. My PhD students have also benefited from the expertise and generous support of colleagues in the Department of Economic and Social History.

funding from several research councils on grounds of its 'relevance'. This outcome would accord with the rule that, as resources diminish, the time and manpower needed to disburse them increase exponentially. The starting date is the point of registration (including instances where registration was backdated), and in all cases was the 1st of October. The terminal point is the date when copies of the completed thesis were submitted formally for examination, and this has been corrected to the nearest month.¹² The time taken by the thirteen students ranges from 32 to 70 months; the arithmetic mean is 3.9 years and the median is almost identical at 47 months. Thus, all of the PhD candidates fall within the four-year period which the Economic and Social Research Council regards as an appropriate limit and which it uses as a measure for disbursing its (diminishing) resources.

But the ESRC, being short-staffed and perhaps a little short-sighted too, is interested only in the dwindling band of students which it funds, whereas the concern of supervisors, and arguably of scholarship as a whole, lies in the academic outcome, irrespective of the source of funding. The general impression that students funded by the ESRC take longer to complete their theses than students financed from other sources finds some support from my (admittedly small) sample. The median time taken by the four students holding ESRC awards was 4.1 years; two submitted in less than four years; and one of the remaining two skewed the average by taking 70 months—the longest in the whole group of thirteen. Since this statistical outlier far exceeded the next longest completion time, it would no doubt be possible to apply a more sophisticated measure of central tendency than the median to reduce the time taken by all the ESRC students below the four-year mark. However, the point of substance, which the ESRC ought to address, is why the minority of students it supports takes longer (albeit in this case only marginally) than students financed from other sources. This question obviously cannot be answered without looking at performance at PhD level as a whole, an exercise which the ESRC has not yet undertaken. No obvious explanation of the differential completion time suggests itself from the data. But since the supervisor and the institution are constants, the principal variables are the students themselves and the source of funding. No case can be made for arguing that ESRC students take longer because they are less able or less well organised than other PhD candidates. All four wrote excellent theses and two were awarded the Ashley Prize for the best PhD presented annually in the Faculty of Commerce and Social Science.¹³ The main explanation may lie within the ESRC itself, for the rule limiting the

12. This procedure follows the guidelines laid down by the ESRC, though the Council's concern (in 1985) was with submission rates, not success rates. See ESRC Committee Paper 280, November 1985.

13. This suggests that ESRC-funded students are among those who produce theses of above average quality; and it is possible that they may also tackle particularly important and demanding subjects.

length of time awards can be held to three years operates particularly harshly in areas of research which require travel and time-consuming fieldwork abroad.¹⁴

Two further technical aspects of evaluating the performance of PhD students (and their supervisors) need to be mentioned. Universities rightly claim that research at doctoral level is one of their distinctive and most prestigious features. Yet there is a tendency to take this activity for granted and even to undervalue it. The growing tyranny of the timetable is responsible for inculcating the view that 'student contact hours' which are not allocated a specific time and room and publicised by a print-out either do not exist or can be regarded as casual labour. And the tyranny of the staff: student ratio, whereby undergraduates and graduates exchange at par, greatly reduces the returns to the input of academics who supervise theses. It is hard to see how anyone with extensive experience at both levels can accept the justice of this equivalence. The easiest way to secure a 'favourable' staff:student ratio is to give lectures—very few may suffice—to large audiences. The time taken by PhD supervision is more variable and less easily quantified, but the demands, when they come, are heavy and also extend beyond formal academic requirements to encompass financial, accommodation and administrative problems, tasks which at undergraduate level are divided from the function of lecturing and entered on a separate tutorial account. It is easier to see how the University Grants Committee once rated graduate work at twice and even three times the load given to undergraduates than to understand how, in the mid-1970s, the figure was reduced from 1.5 to 1. Late in the day though it is, this is surely a matter which needs to be looked at again. A mystifying consequence of the undervaluation of doctoral supervision is that academics themselves minimise its importance. Applications for senior academic posts will be certain to list every publication which the candidate has ever put his name to, no matter how trivial, but rarely include a record of doctoral supervisions, even when it exists.

Other measures of performance include employment and related activities after completion, though these are rarely invoked (no doubt because of the research effort required to produce the data). Eight of the thirteen students are employed in higher education in the United Kingdom, Africa and North America. They include: two professors, one associate professor, one senior lecturer, and three lecturers in universities, and one senior lecturer in a college of education. Two other former doctoral students hold positions at

14. This suggestion accords with the performance of students supervised by Dr Paul Richards and reported by him in a letter to *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, 1 August 1986, p. 2. It should also be observed that students requiring a 'conversion' course leading to an MA or an MSc use up one of their three ESRC-funded years, and are therefore placed in the particularly difficult position of having to research and write a PhD with only two years guaranteed financial support.

the highest level of government in their respective countries in Africa, one has a senior post with the Tropical Development and Research Institute in Britain, and one is clinging to a post-doctoral research award in the United Kingdom in the hope that a permanent academic job might become available. Twelve of the thirteen therefore have employment which makes direct use of their training. It is perhaps a sign of the times that the remaining student joined a merchant bank in the City, thus demonstrating conclusively that doctoral research can produce wisdom as well as knowledge and understanding.

Three of the theses have appeared as books, and one more is in press. It is reasonable to expect that three or four of the theses completed recently will also be published eventually. Ex-students who have not published their theses and who hold university posts have published articles, and have also produced books on other subjects.

An assessment of the history which appears in these theses is best left to others because supervisors lose the capacity to judge the work of their students at about the point when they have finished with the penultimate draft. However, two general observations remain in the sieve after more refined reflections have been discarded, and these may be worth noting.

The first observation is that the intention from the outset was not to create a 'school', but to develop the individuality of the student. This has involved trying to link particular skills and interests to topics which avoided academic fashion but caught (and ideally anticipated) the trend. The extent to which this aim has been realised can be judged from the range and the chronology of the titles of the theses given in the Appendix. The second observation concerns the type of economic history which has been written. The subject has been approached through history rather more than through economics. Attempts to adjust the balance have met only limited success, mainly because the present generation of economists has been educated to pursue high theory rather than low reality, and consequently has been taught to avoid the study of institutions, power, and history.¹⁵ This bias has undoubtedly restricted the range of analytical techniques which has been brought to bear on Africa's economic past, and not only by students at Birmingham. On the other hand, the application of 'orthodox economics' to Africa is beset by difficulties, and the approach adopted in the Centre has aimed at producing work which is more inclined to read out of the evidence than to read into it, and has applied empirical tests to theoretical propositions which have gained currency in development studies, from the vent-for-surplus model to the dependency thesis. Moreover, on the most advanced frontiers of development economics there is now a growing awareness of the need to integrate theory more closely with reality,

15. See the perceptive and authoritative reflections of W. A. Lewis, 'The State of Development Theory', *American Economic Review*, 74 (1984), pp. 1-10.

and this recognition has begun to reawaken an interest in the contribution which the study of history can make to an understanding of contemporary problems.¹⁶ Economists may yet endow the study of the past with the cachet of relevance, and historians may find themselves more highly valued in the future than they are at present.

The Future of the African Past

It is hard to think of a revolution in modern scholarship which can compare in speed and scope with the creation of the body of literature contained under the rubric of African studies. Knowledge and understanding have been transformed in the space of a generation. Intellectual enquiry, stimulated by new evidence about the past and alive to the problems of the present, has retained its vigour. Historians of Africa have yet to succumb to the temptation of writing 'unheroic history'¹⁷ because they are engaged with a continent which manifests, in its past and its present, a heroic and sometimes tragic struggle—that for survival.

And yet the subject is dying because its practitioners are fading away. The record of African economic history at Birmingham, where the last British PhD student registered in 1979 and finished in 1984, mirrors the national situation. As Richard Hodder-Williams has shown, less than 8 per cent of Africanists in British universities are under the age of 35, and the majority are over 45.¹⁸ The demographic implications are inescapable: unless rapid action is taken to open the way for young recruits, the Grim Reaper and his adjutant, the officer administering early retirement, will close the account of African studies in this country soon after the turn of the century. Sir Peter Parker's *Report* provides comprehensive support for this depressing conclusion, and demonstrates its applicability to Asian as well as to African studies.¹⁹ No smokescreen of doubt can cover his unambiguous findings: 'Thus the impetus and priority imparted to Oriental and African studies by the Scarbrough and Hayter Reports have steadily diminished to the point where a considered and active national policy for these studies cannot be said to exist at all'.²⁰ From the perspective of the national interest, 'this amounts to consigning whole areas of the world to a linguistic and informational vacuum'.²¹

16. Douglas Rimmer's incisive critique of development economics is still pertinent: *Macromancy: The Ideology of 'Development Economics'* (Hobart Paper, 55, London, 1973). For one historian's response to an invitation from development economists to contribute to an understanding of current issues see A. G. Hopkins, 'The World Bank in Africa: historical reflections on the African present', *World Development*, 14 (1986), pp. 1025–39.

17. Cannadine, 'The State of British History', p. 1140.

18. Hodder-Williams, 'African Studies', Table 1, p. 597.

19. 'Speaking for the Future: A Review of the Requirements of Diplomacy and Commerce for Asian and African Languages and Area Studies', (A Report to the University Grants Committee, February 1986).

20. Parker, 'Speaking for the Future', p. 18.

21. *Ibid.* p. 77.

This decline is not paralleled elsewhere in Europe or in North America, where research into the African past still has a future. But Britain's contribution to African studies, and indeed to the wider world of scholarship, is being compromised by a steady drift towards provincialism. As this happens, we shall not only lose our way in an increasingly cosmopolitan world, but also reach the highest stage of dependence: the self-imposed reliance upon foreign sources of information. And we have chosen to dissipate our intellectual capital at a time when, in default of other resources, we need to live off our educated wits, to develop our global connections in the post-colonial age, and to prepare our citizens for a world in which hermits have no place. Ibn Khaldun regarded a knowledge of history as being essential to the art of government because it enabled rulers to understand the impediments to achieving the common good. Today, as we regress from this insight, we can only hope that our rulers can still learn something new from Africa.

Appendix

This Appendix lists, in order of completion, the Ph.D. theses supervised by me at Birmingham University. Information is presented in the following order: the name of the author, the title of the thesis, the year the degree was conferred, the name of the external examiner, and the source of funding.

1. A. J. H. Latham, 'Old Calabar, 1600-1891: The Economic Impact of the West Upon a Traditional Society' (1970); Dr G. I. Jones, Cambridge; State Studentship and Leverhulme Research Scholarship.
2. M. H. Y. Kaniki, 'An Economic and Social History of Sierra Leone, 1929-1939' (1972); Mr C. C. Wrigley, Sussex; Rockefeller Foundation.
3. G. O. Ogunremi, 'Pre-Colonial Transport in Nigeria' (1973); Mr C. C. Wrigley, Sussex; Nigerian Government Scholarship.
4. P. Greenhalgh, 'An Economic History of the Gold Coast Diamond Industry' (1974); Dr H. L. van der Laan, Leiden; SSRC.
5. M. J. M. Sibanda, 'Colonial Policy and Development in North-West Sierra Leone, 1896-1939' (1978); Prof T. O. Ranger, Manchester; Commonwealth Scholarship.
6. A. A. O. Jeng, 'An Economic History of the Gambian Groundnut Industry, 1830-1924: The Evolution of an Export Economy' (1979); Prof J. D. Hargreaves, Aberdeen; Commonwealth Scholarship.
7. J. H. Bowden, 'Development and Control in British Colonial Policy with Reference to Nigeria and the Gold Coast, 1935-1948' (1980); Prof J. D. Hargreaves, Aberdeen; SSRC.
8. W. A. Wardle, 'A History of the British Cotton Growing Association with Special Reference to its Operations in Northern Nigeria' (1980); Prof C. Ehrlich, Belfast; self-financed.
9. E. A. McDougall, 'The Ijil Salt Industry: Its Role in the Pre-Colonial Economy of the Western Sudan' (1980); Dr H. J. Fisher, London; Commonwealth Scholarship.
10. S. Martin, 'The History of the Oil-Palm Industry in South-Eastern Nigeria: The Case of the Ngwa Region, 1891-1929' (1984); Dr C. W. Newbury, Oxford; SSRC.

NOTES AND NEWS

Royal African Society Autumn Meetings:

- 10 September Mr Louis Nchindo (Resident Director of Anglo American Corporation in Botswana) in London on 'The Private Sector in Botswana'
- 17 September Mr Hugh Speed (Honorary Engineering Advisor to Wateraid) in London on 'Low Cost Water Schemes in Rural Africa'
- 30 September Dr Karin Barber (Centre of West African Studies, University of Birmingham) in London on 'Yoruba Popular Theatre'
- 23 October Dr Robin Palmer (Writer and Researcher on Africa) in London on 'The Media and Famines in Africa—Biafra to Band Aid'
- 31 October Dr Michael Twaddle (Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London) in Bristol on 'Latest Impressions of Uganda'
- 18 November President Yoweri Museveni (President of Uganda) in London on 'Uganda'
- 18 November Dr Michael Twaddle (Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London) in London on 'Uganda After Obote'
- 21 November Roger Martin (Retired Deputy British High Commissioner, Harare) in Bristol on 'Zimbabwe Today'
- 2 December Dr Nigel Barley (Keeper of West and North African Collection in the Museum of Mankind) in Bristol on 'West African Bronzes'
- 2 December Professor Dennis Austin in Birmingham on 'The Crisis in South Africa'
- 4 December A Panel Discussion to mark the 30th Anniversary of Suez in London with Ahmed Hamrush (Former Editor of 'Rose al Yousef'), Abdel-Majied Faried (Formerly President Nasser's Private Secretary) and Dr Souad al Sabah (Chair)
- 5 December A private guided tour by Dr J. Mack of the Madagascar Ethnographic Exhibition at the Museum of Mankind, British Museum

University of London, workshops on agriculture, nutrition and health in Africa

A series of interdisciplinary workshops is being held at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London, 2–5 pm on the following dates:

Friday 23 January, Agricultural Productivity and Population Density

Friday 20 February, 'Indigenous Agronomy and Indigenous Economics'

Friday 13 March, 'The State and Agriculture'

Further details from the organisers, Dr Gareth Austin, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 27-28 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DS (tel. 01-580-5876) and Dr Richard Rathbone, School of Oriental and African Studies, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HP (tel. 01-637-2388)

Sudan studies

The Sudan Studies Society of the UK (SSSUK) is being launched by Ms Lesley Forbes, Professor G. N. Sanderson, Dr A. Trilsbach and Dr P. R. Woodward, with initial support from the Gordon Memorial Trust. It aims to promote Sudan studies in all fields through a newsletter and conferences, and to disseminate material on Sudan to other interested bodies. Anyone wishing more information on SSSUK is warmly encouraged to contact Dr A. Trilsbach, Department of Geography, University of Durham, Science Laboratories, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE.

Standing Conference on Library Materials on Africa

In 1987 the Standing Conference on Library Materials on Africa (SCOLMA) will celebrate its 25th anniversary. To mark this event a Silver Jubilee Conference will be held on 14th-15th May 1987 at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London on the theme of 'New directions in African bibliography'.

The aims of the Conference are to examine areas of African studies where bibliography and documentation is inadequate or lacking, and to take a forward look over the next twenty five years of African bibliography; it is intended that papers will be presented on such topics as African languages and literature, dance and drama, health, politics and history, the media and archaeology.

Full details of the Conference, together with a booking form may be obtained from: SCOLMA Secretary, c/o Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 27-28, Russell Square, London WC1B 5DS, U.K.

University of Cambridge, African Studies Centre

Contributions to the Cambridge African Monograph series published by the Centre are welcomed. The series aims to make available occasional research reports, seminar papers, conference proceedings and bibliographies relating to African studies. The prospective author should, in the first instance, contact the Director of the Centre to find out if the work for which publication is sought would be of interest for the series. Details from the Director, African Studies Centre, University of Cambridge, Free School Lane, Cambridge CB2 3RQ, U.K.

Victoria League for Commonwealth Friendship

The Victoria League is a Charity which arranges for young people and visitors from overseas to spend the day, weekends, Easter and Christmas with a British family.

All hosts/hostesses are offered a small contribution of £4.00 per night per guest and the League gives a donation towards the student's travelling expenses.

If you would like to help by inviting these young people please get in touch with: The General Secretary, The Victoria League, 18 Northumberland Avenue, London WC2N 5BJ.

Data Protection Act 1984

All members should be aware that our membership records are moving to a computer-based system and in terms of the above Act we are required to inform you of this. If you have any objection kindly advise us within the next month.

African Studies Association Annual General Meeting

Minutes of the Twenty-third Annual General Meeting of the African Studies Association of the United Kingdom, held at the University of Kent at Canterbury on 19 September 1986 at 10.45 a.m.

Present: D. B. Birmingham (President), D. Rimmer (Vice-President), N. Nelson (Hon. Secretary), R. Palmer (Hon. Treasurer), T. Abdul-Rahim, A. Akeroyd, J. Ballantyne, D. Belshaw, I. Brightmenr, R. Brown, D. Cochrane, C. Dennis, M. Doortmont, E. Dunstan, J. Eades, D. Gaitskell, C. Guido, A. Gurnan, C. Graffenreid, H. Han, H. Hansen, N. Harris, R. J. Harrison-Church, H. Hughes, L. Katzen, R. Keymer, D. Killingray, A. Kirk-Greene, H. Van der Laan, M. Leach, M. Moore, W. Morgan, M. Noah, S. Othman, A. Pallinder, G. Porter, T. Ranger, A. Ravenscroft, P. Rich, P. Richards, A. Roberts, P. Roberts, K. Robinson, J. Schipper, R. Smyth, J. Theakestone, M. Vaughan, O. Vaughan, E. Wetton, S. Winsnes, J. Wiseman, P. Woodward, H. Zee.

1. *Minutes of the Twenty-second Annual General Meeting*, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed with minor changes.

2. *Report by the Hon. Secretary*

The Hon. Secretary reported that a membership drive had been launched and that membership had risen from 384 in 1985 to 410 in 1986.

Administration had been greatly improved by the appointment of Mrs Lindsay Allan as Secretary of RAS and ASA UK, with Ms Felicity Slinger, assisted by Ms Valerie Spicer, as part-time book-keepers for both societies.

Symposia and the biennial conference had gone well. Symposia in London in December on Alcohol in Africa and in Stirling in May on Legitimacy and Authority in Africa had been well attended, and Professor Birmingham had organized a varied programme for the conference at Kent. Ideas for future symposia included Africa and the Media, Southern Africa, Africa and the Performing Arts, while the 1988 conference will be at Cambridge.

ASAUK remained actively involved with a number of other bodies. As well as RAS, it was represented by Mr Kirk-Greene on the Standing Conference on Library Materials on Africa (SCOLMA): by Dr Woodward on the Standing Committee on University Studies of Africa (SCUSA): and by officers on the Co-ordinating Council of Area Studies Associations (CCASA). In addition the European Council on African Studies (ECAS) held its Inaugural Symposium in March, and ASAUK would be represented

by Dr Clarence-Smith who had become its General Secretary. The Association also gave evidence to the enquiry into African and Oriental languages and related area studies chaired by Sir Peter Parker.

3. *Report by the Hon. Treasurer*

The Hon. Treasurer reported a continuing improvement in the Association's finances. Because there was no conference in 1985 both income and expenditure were considerably lower than in the previous year. A formal audit, now to become a triennial arrangement, had been conducted by Messrs. Uppal & Warr (formerly Lizar, Warr & Co.)

4. *Appointment of Auditors*

It was agreed that Messrs Uppal & Warr would continue as Auditors.

5. *Election of Officers and Council Members*

The following nominations were approved for Officers and Council Members of the Association.

President: Mr Douglas Rimmer

Vice-President: Mr Anthony Kirk-Greene

The Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer remain in office for a further year.

Council: Dr Moragh Bell; Dr Davidson Nichol; Dr Alan Cousins; Dr Roger Bromley; Dr Abdul Guram; Dr Henrietta Moore; Dr John Mack.

6. *Any other Business*

- (1) The RAS has been donated a computer on which membership records will in future be kept. Under the Data Protection Act 1984 ASAUK is required to inform its members of this and if anybody has an objection please write as soon as possible to the Hon. Secretary.
- (2) It was agreed to bring ASAUK corporate membership in line with that of RAS.
- (3) Mr Douglas Rimmer warmly thanked the retiring President, Professor Birmingham, for all his work on behalf of the Association.

The meeting closed at 11.50.

N. Nelson
Hon. Secretary

**AFRICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 1985**

	1985 £	1984 £
INCOME		
Subscriptions	3,646	3,383
Conference fees	—	6,544
Publications	99	40
Deposit interest	329	120
Symposia fees	556	37
Royalties	121	323
Donations	—	90
	4,751	10,537
EXPENDITURE		
Stationery and printing	277	320
Postage and sundries	71	269
Accountancy charges	316	173
Council expenses	21	24
Conference expenses	—	4,306
Symposia expenses	493	36
Royal African Society		
Affiliation fee	2,491	2,595
	3,669	7,723
NET INCOME FOR THE YEAR	<u>£1,082</u>	<u>£2,814</u>

**AFRICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 1985**

	1985 £	1984 £
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash at bank—current account	207	2,005
—deposit account	4,554	2,675
Sundry debtors	—	144
	<u>4,761</u>	<u>4,824</u>
 CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Sundry creditors	603	1,748
NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>£4,158</u>	<u>£3,076</u>
 Financed by:		
ACCUMULATED FUND		
Balance at 1st January 1985	3,076	262
Net income for the year	1,082	2,814
Surplus 31st December 1985	<u>£4,158</u>	<u>£3,076</u>

..... HONORARY TREASURER
R. H. PALMER

..... HONORARY SECRETARY
N. NELSON

REVIEW ARTICLE

THE POLITICS OF FAMINE—SOME RECENT LITERATURE

PAUL RICHARDS

THE REPORT BY Leftwich and Harvie is a most useful survey of the present state of research into famine.¹ Famine studies raise issues of major significance for social theory, the authors suggest, but so far these issues have not been absorbed within the social science mainstream. They note, with surprise, that 'some of the major social sciences disciplines (economics, political science, sociology and anthropology) are represented in the [famine] literature *very weakly indeed*' (p. 20, my emphasis). Partly this reflects the fact that much famine research is of urgent practical import and is relatively inaccessible to academic researchers (some of the best material is locked up in relief agency reports of limited circulation). Nor is the frenetic ambience of famine relief best calculated to encourage reflection or careful comparative study. Despite the present hostile financial climate, some university institutions in Britain have managed to provide sabbatical spaces where famine fieldworkers can compose their thoughts and establish links with the mainstream social sciences (the refugee studies programme at Queen Elizabeth House in Oxford is notable in this respect), but the position is much less favourable in famine afflicted areas themselves. There is scope here for major new international initiative (perhaps a Pan-African Institute of Famine Studies, supported by the relief agencies under the auspices of a major research foundation or the United Nations University).

The other major reason for the academic marginalization of famine studies is that the topic cuts across one of the most heavily fortified of all intellectual frontiers—the Berlin Wall between the biological and social sciences. Biologists and technologists who feel they know already what to do to relieve hunger are sometimes quite critical of the amount of time needed to explore social aspects of food systems (cf. Simmonds on social anthropologists in farming systems research).² Conversely, some social scientists appear to presume that an emphasis on biological or environmental causes of famine

The author teaches in the Anthropology Department, University College, London.

1. A. Leftwich and D. Harvie, *The political economy of famine: a preliminary report on the literature, bibliographic resources, research activities and needs in the UK* (Institute for Research in the Social Sciences, Institute of Social and Economic Research and Dept. of Politics, University of York, Discussion Paper 116, 1986).

2. N. W. Simmonds, *Farming systems research: a review* (Washington, World Bank Technical Paper No. 43, 1985).

is to embrace the ideological pre-suppositions of socio-biology and environmental determinism.

Geography is a partial exception to some of Leftwich and Harvie's strictures on the inadequacy of social science inputs to the study of famine (though, disappointingly, they make no reference to Watts³ [see below], or Michael Mortimore,⁴ two major contributors to the geographical literature on African famine). But geography itself occupies a marginal (and in some quarters increasingly tenuous position) in the social sciences, and conscious of this marginality many geographers in recent years have pursued respectability in the Halls of Grand Theory to the detriment of the skills that once made for effective contributions to fields such as famine studies.⁵

Leftwich offers a Trojan Horse solution to these kinds of problems.⁶ He takes the 'core' social science discipline of politics and redefines it so that it is no longer solely or largely the study of the institutions of government and the struggles for power which surround them, but the analysis of all forms of cooperation and conflict through which people organize the use, production and distribution of human, natural and material resources. Famine emerges as a central focus in this redefined political science, because within any famine the politics of resource competition stand so clearly and starkly revealed. Leftwich and Harvie outline some crucial issues for further study. These include comparative studies of famines and near-famines (historically and across regions), detailed work on hunger coping and famine insurance strategies (again with attention being paid to careful comparisons), the analysis of factors triggering famine in some countries and regions but not others, country profiles of famine risks and disaster-preparedness, work on correlations between socio-economic and political structures, policies and processes and the incidence of famine (e.g. does suppression or promotion of an open market contribute to the conditions which cause famine?), analysis of the operation of rural markets in famines, and the effects of famine on different groups and classes (e.g. the differential impact on men and women).

Given the stress that Leftwich and Harvie place on the centrality of politics, it is of interest to note the importance accorded to politics in three recently published titles focusing on famine in Africa. *Famine: a man-made disaster*⁷ need not detain us long (though this is not to belittle its usefulness to a general readership looking for a short, well-written account of some of the latest ideas and debates about hunger and the environmental crisis in Africa). It is a report, composed by journalists

3. M. Watts, *Silent violence: food, famine and peasantry in northern Nigeria* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1983).

4. M. J. Mortimore, 'Famine in Hausaland, 1973', *Savanna* 2 (1973) pp. 103-7.

5. D. Barker, 'Core, periphery and focus for geography', *Area* 18, 2 (1986) pp. 157-60.

6. A. Leftwich, *Redefining politics: people, resources and power* (Methuen, 1983).

7. Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues, *Famine: a man-made disaster?* (Pan Books, 1985).

from materials supplied by expert consultants, for the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues (and thus compares with earlier pronouncements by the international 'great and good' on environmental and development issues, notably the reports of the Club of Rome and the Brandt Commission). The argument is that the victims are not to blame, that to date population pressure cannot be held responsible for famine in large parts of Africa (a relatively lightly populated continent), that much more blame should attach to trends in aid and development (e.g. transfer of inappropriate agricultural technology), and that rightly understood there are real possibilities for rebuilding African small-scale agriculture as an effective defence against continuing hunger and periodic famine. Whatever dispute this last proposition might provoke, it is nevertheless interesting to note the change in thinking and tone from both the Club of Rome's *Limits to growth* (1972) and Brandt (with its strong emphasis on North-South flows of technological assistance). In some ways, the main interest of the book is in the message it carries about changing international political perceptions of famine issues. Would any mass paperback publishing house have taken a book on African famine prior to Bantam? Would Dr David Owen have written the preface? Leftwich and Harvie, having carried out a questionnaire survey of current British work on famine, report zero entries for the research departments of the main political parties. But the Labour Party now seems to be convinced that there may be votes in the 'Geldof for President' constituency, and promises to include development issues in its manifesto for the next election. Presumably, David Owen's contribution to *Famine: a man-made disaster* signals a similar political perception. The new international popular awareness of famine and humanitarian issues, to which these changes correspond, is a truly remarkable phenomenon and merits thorough analysis in the Anstey tradition.⁸ Like the debates over the ending of the slave trade, it is still highly contentious whether the end of famine and hunger can be hastened by such changes in humanitarian perception, or whether fundamental reforms in systems of production and distribution must wait their economic moment.

The book by Preston King is primarily concerned with the extent to which famine in north east Africa should be accounted for in terms of national and international rivalry.⁹ Part of his case is that super-power politics finds it more profitable, or cost-effective, to meddle at the margins than to invest in strong, stable and predictable relations with the major heartland states in Africa. Lacking strategic saliency (in relation, say, to international shipping lanes) but with socio-economic and internal political tensions in abundance, Ethiopia and Sudan are unattractive fields for the geo-political

8. R. Anstey, *The Atlantic slave trade and British abolition, 1760-1810* (London, 1975).

9. P. King, *An African Winter* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1986).

endeavours of the super-powers. In shifting the balance of their attention in the region from Ethiopia to Somalia the Americans secured a better strategic position (in relation to the Red Sea and Gulf) and (because Somalia has a much smaller population than Ethiopia) proportionately greater political influence per dollar of aid expended. Thus generously provisioned by American food and military aid the Somali regime, so Professor King argues, is able to deal with the internal tensions caused by drought better than Ethiopia, and finds itself in a position to sustain military and diplomatic offensives against its more fragile neighbour. Meanwhile, Ethiopia and the Soviet Union are pushed, perhaps unwillingly, into closer alliance by American support for Somalia. Irrespective of arguments about whether or not development strategies embarked upon under the influence of this relationship have worsened the position of a drought-affected peasantry, it is obvious that hostile, well-armed, well-supplied neighbours must compound the problems of famine relief in a near-land-locked Ethiopia.

Professor King documents many of these problems in graphic detail. The picture to emerge is depressing confirmation of the central proposition that super-power rivalry and regional political tensions have worsened the famine situation in north east Africa. His book is a timely reminder, therefore, that diplomacy may have as much to contribute to the prevention and relief of famine as emergency shipments of food and long-term agricultural development. However, some will question whether *An African winter* establishes a convincing case for regarding national and super-power rivalries as the main or over-riding cause of famine in Africa more generally. Professor King's case may fit Ethiopia, Chad and Sudan but not the Sahel westwards from Niger. Why are international relations crucial in some cases but not in others? *An African winter* cannot provide any answer to this question because it fails to engage with the politics of famine in the sense defined by Leftwich, namely, the analysis of all forms of cooperation and conflict invoked by peoples' use, production and distribution of human, natural and material resources. Without showing in specific production and distribution environments how hunger is normally held at bay, and how and under what circumstances systems of production and distribution break down, the relative importance of 'international relations' and 'diplomatic factors' cannot be assigned any magnitude.

The study which comes closest to Leftwich & Harvie's notion of a political economy of African famine is Watts' *magnum opus* on northern Nigeria. Truly 'a weighty tome', this is a book that requires both intellectual stamina and strong wrists. (Intending purchasers had also better heed the warning contained in an invitation I once received in Sierra Leone: 'come financially strong'!) The book is securely based on fieldwork Watts undertook, in the aftermath of the Sahel famine of 1972-4, on methods of coping with hunger in a village, Kaita, in northern Katsina emirate, close to the Niger border.

It ranges much more widely than a conventional 'village study', however. In fact, his detailed geographical material is largely restricted to a single chapter (ch. 7). The first three chapters trace links between food supply, famine and climatic hazard in Hausaland in the 19th century and the socio-economic and political constitution of the Sokoto Caliphate up to the point of British conquest. Chapters 4-6 cover similar issues for the colonial period, dwelling largely on the issue of capitalist penetration under colonialism and the changes thus wrought in peasant household economy and vulnerability to risk. Chapter 7 concentrates on the famine of the early '70s, and the book ends with a wide ranging analysis of food and agricultural issues in Nigeria under oil-boom conditions.

Watts argues that Hausaland is no stranger to climatic disturbance and famine. He draws upon the notion of a pre-capitalist 'moral economy'¹⁰ to argue that under the social conditions characteristic of the Sokoto Caliphate the poor were able to seek some protection from the ravages of famine through customary claims on the rich. Society was inegalitarian but stable. Under colonialism, however, many of these unequal but stable social relations, e.g. patron-client linkages, began to break down under the impact of the cash economy and circuits of reproduction of merchant's capital. He challenges the notion that the small farmer in Hausaland is free to act in an entrepreneurial and business-like manner (a conclusion arrived at in varying degrees by Hill, Matlon, and Norman, for example¹¹) and that local grain markets are open and freely responsive to price signals (and with it the implication that market prices may be used as guides to planning resource utilization on a rational basis). He argues instead for a 'structural' interpretation in terms of 'laws' of reproduction of merchant's capital:

In sum, merchant capital seemingly occupies a strategic position in the perpetuation of rural inequality: the well-to-do have better connections outside the village, debt and inheritance practices ensure that the poor cannot break out of the food-shortage-wage-labouring cycle, and migration appears as the termination of a gradual slide into desperate impoverishment (p. 452).

The detailed fieldwork described in Chapter 7 shows how peasants in Kaita struggle to adjust to drought, hunger and eventual famine through a series of technical and agronomic adaptations (involving intercropping and increased use of valley-bottom cultivation sites), labour migration and debt. There are many especially interesting and felicitous touches in this section. On p. 418, for example, Watts writes that although

10. E. P. Thompson, *The making of the English working class* (London 1963).

11. P. Hill, *Rural Hausa: a village and a setting* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1972); P. Matlon, D. W. Norman, *An economic survey of three villages in Zaria Province: vol. 2 Input-output study* (Samaru, Zaria: Institute of Agricultural Research, 1972).

Kaita farmers had little understanding of or interest in causes of drought:

they had a remarkable, almost visceral, grasp of the empirical consequences of rainfall deficits (or surfeits) on their crops, and of the prescribed ways in which the symptoms might be treated. Since the Hausa farming system is based on manual cultivation it has the great strength of flexibility, which is reflected in the ability of the farmer to continually adjust his cropping patterns as the season unfolds. It is this adaptive flexibility and management in relation to subsistence needs that underpins . . . discussion of drought and food shortage.

He is also rightly critical (in my view) of Norman [and other FSR researchers in northern Nigeria] for the notion that crop mixtures are an immutable 'standard farm plan' 'apparently instituted grosso modo every year' (p. 423).

Crop mixtures appear as static, ready-calibrated agricultural programs that are run automatically year after year. All that changes inter-annually, it seems, is output. Yet what characterizes Kaita agriculture above all else is its flexibility, and a crucial property of most Hausa farming systems is their ability to be continuously adjusted and tuned.

Yet however ingenious, the potential of such coping mechanisms is, according to Watts, soon exhausted, due to the biases against the poor built into the modern merchant economy. He suggests that even if the poor in Kaita had known for certain in 1971 that the next two years would be drought years they could have done little or nothing to avoid the consequences. In this respect some will judge that Watts gives too much ground to the 'pseudo-radical pessimism' common in 1970s literature on African social change 'which simultaneously requires social transformation as the minimal initial condition but asserts its impossibility except by *deus ex machina*'.¹² In the end, however, it transpires that the model for *Silent violence* is not the mode-of-production debate but E. P. Thompson's *The making of the English working class*. Watts is concerned to establish the important point that a great part of the history and sociology of northern Nigeria is the history and sociology of small farmers and their battles against climatic adversity. Some readers will be tempted to complain about length, stylistic lapses, and theoretical eclecticism, but none will deny that *Silent violence* has been conceived on a scale that is entirely appropriate to the importance of its subject. It is a major achievement.

12. B. Schaffer and G. Lamb, *Can equity be organised? Development analysis and planning* (Aldershot, Gower, 1981) p. 10.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Africans. A Triple Heritage, By Ali A. Mazrui. BBC Publications, London, 1986. 336 pp. £14.95 hardback. ISBN 0 563 20282 3.

In this handsomely illustrated companion volume to his recent television programmes of the same name, Ali Mazrui offers a wide-ranging and provocative series of ruminations on the African condition. In his first sentence, Mazrui states that 'The ancestors of Africa are angry'. Throughout the book, he returns to this image, arguing that African progress requires Africans first to reclaim an indigenous heritage that is in danger of being overwhelmed by Western and Muslim cultural invasions. Unfortunately, the author's attempt to define this specifically African inheritance leads him both to slight diversity within the continent and to exaggerate distinctions between African societies and agricultural societies elsewhere in the world.

While Mazrui displays an impressive erudition throughout, the result is uneven. The geographical chapter, for example, eschews the usual background for an original examination of how Africa's shape has been defined and how its border might be different. But other chapters give excessive attention to relatively peripheral topics such as sport or the Jewish influence on Africa, while basic issues like ethnicity receive no sustained discussion. Mazrui also has an irritating attraction to original coinages and the overly neat argument. Hence, we come across the 'esthetic of imperialism', 'romantic gloriana', and the 'sexercise gap', as we learn that rural Africans are divided between 'lovers of land' and 'lovers of animals'. Africa's backwardness is explained essentially as the product of a 'winter gap'. According to Mazrui, cold is the parent of technology, and the change of seasons the progenitor of planning. No mention is made of William McNeill's much more sophisticated and persuasive discussion of the connections between climate, disease and unequal development, let alone the perspectives found in the materialist literature. While his reliance on various cultural explanations often seems excessive, his emphasis on religion—particularly the role of Islam—is welcome.

One can't help but wonder for whom this book is intended. Certainly, it is not for specialists, but a number of his points are unlikely to make sense to anyone else. Presumably, the audience is meant to be the general British and North American public, but much of the last part of the book reads like an impassioned plea to Africans to change their ways. This is clearly a personal statement, illustrated by some bits of the author's family's history that are both appealing and enlightening.

Finally, while a select bibliography is included, a list of sources by topic would have been more appropriate for those readers who might and should feel inclined to take the author up on various points.

Harvard University

CHARLES AMBLER

The Cambridge History of Africa, Vol. 8, c. 1940–c. 1975, edited by Michael Crowder. Cambridge University Press, 1984. xvi+1011 pp. £55. ISBN 0 521 22409 8.

Michael Crowder's editorial achievement in producing this volume of the Cambridge History of Africa commands admiration. The contributors are distinguished and appropriate. The structure of the volume is logical and orderly and makes it easy to use. The tone of the contributions is, almost without exception, balanced, judicious, fair-minded and objective. And the excellent bibliography

provides a most useful appendix to a volume which no academic library will want to be without but which few academics will be able to afford.

This is, of course, a work of contemporary history with all the difficulties that that presents. Very little of it is based on archival sources. And it deals with a period and a subject that historians in the West, and even more in Africa, find it difficult to approach with a real sense of detachment. Rightly or wrongly, decolonization is regarded by practically the entire spectrum of academic opinion as the inevitable triumph of Progress over Reaction, even if the eventual outcome was in some cases disappointing. Thus a good deal of what passes for the contemporary history of Africa is actually either polemic or celebration. That is why the cool and critical tone of this volume is so much to be welcomed.

After a sharp and penetrating chapter by the editor which sets the scene for the post-war changes, the volume is divided into a set of thematic chapters dealing with social, political and economic change over the whole continent, and a larger number of 'regional' chapters, some of the regions being cultural, others geographic. Of the thematic chapters, Professor Peel's on social and cultural change is easily the best. His discussion of the social structure of African societies, and in particular of the role and significance of tribalism, will surely serve as an ideal short introduction to a difficult and complex subject for some time to come. Billy J. Dudley's chapter on decolonization and the problems of independence delivers a harsh verdict on the reality of African sovereignty (p. 86) but it is difficult not to feel that a more sympathetic account of the political and administrative handicaps under which contemporary African governments labour would have served the reader better. By what yardstick, after all, are we to judge the success or failure of the new states of the continent?

The regional chapters set out to provide a brief history of the period in a very limited space; the six states of East and Central Africa receive a mere seventy-four pages. In some cases the constraints may have made the chapters a little bland but in general they provide helpful surveys of regions whose internal differences are often as striking as the larger inter-regional divergences. The most successful is that by Crawford Young, perhaps because Zaire, Burundi and Rwanda make up a more coherent 'region' than most. This is a model chapter in its clarity, its sympathetic dissection of opposing interests and in particular in its treatment of the tragic but gifted figure of Tshombe, too often dismissed as a colonialist stooge. The chapter, by contrast, that will strike many readers as the least persuasive—because its partisanship has been overtaken by events—is that on the former Portuguese colonies of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea. Fluent, interesting and passionate, its uncritical championship of Frelimo and the MPLA, and its characterization of Unita as a 'collection of bands' reflects a less measured assessment of African politics than most of the contributions in this volume.

If there is a criticism to be made of this volume it is, perhaps, that the major themes of African history since 1940 do not emerge as strongly as they might have done. The central theme of independence and of how and why it was realized seems curiously underdeveloped. Michael Crowder's introductory chapter gives an excellent lead. But neither in Dudley's thematic chapter nor in the regional chapters (with the exception of Cherry Gertzel's and Crawford Young's) will the reader find much to *explain* the events that give this period of African history its special interest. At bottom this may reflect the underdevelopment of decolonization as a subject as well as the constraints of a survey volume of this kind. But it would be churlish to end with a grumble. This a most useful, and handsomely produced, book and the editor deserves our thanks.

Nuffield College, Oxford

J. G. DARWIN

Population, Health and Nutrition in the Sahel, edited by Allan G. Hill. KPI Ltd, 1985. xxiii + 399 pp. £15.00 paperback. ISBN 0 7103 0099 9.

The Struggle for Health: Medicine and the Politics of Underdevelopment, by David Sanders with Richard Carver. Macmillan, 1985. xii + 232 pp. £12.00 hardback, £2.95 paperback. ISBN 0 333 27529 7.

The first of these two books is a scholarly collection of impeccably scientific studies of the demography of Sahelian pastoralists in Mali. Multi-authored and multi-sponsored, it represents the work of a variety of disciplines whose keen representatives, from Britain and France, were able to investigate the situation in the early '80s following a previous drought. It is emphatically not another 'crisis in Africa' volume, however. These are valuable, highly detailed first-hand records of the social organization and mode of livelihood of people who have developed notably successful ways of surviving.

The editor carefully avoids preconceived notions and mistaken contrasts between nomads and farmers, settling instead for systematic examinations of fertility, nutrition and health in five distinct populations. The authors are not simple ecologists but insist upon introducing economic and cultural considerations when trying to interpret change. One particularly interesting example (which only meticulous field work uncovered) is the demonstration of a significantly higher child mortality among noble Tamasheq families in the Niger Delta than among the Bella ex-slaves, who act as nursemaids. The investigators suspect that this may be due to the way in which the wealthy women are out of touch with their own young children whose care they relegate to lowly servants. But this whole volume is packed with examples of good epidemiological research in singularly unpromising settings.

The struggle for health is too often represented as an inevitable consequence of ignorance and poverty. David Sanders has written a book which, in paperback, should be obligatory reading for all health workers meaning to go to under-developed countries. The health care resources which poor populations are denied are distributed by influential professionals and politicians in the wealthy cities who are rarely concerned with equity. The book assembles familiar findings regarding child morbidity, diseases consequent on malnutrition and poor sanitation. It draws instructive comparisons between the situation in nineteenth century Britain and in parts of today's Third World; it describes various health auxiliaries and their impact; it criticizes the pharmaceutical industries and inappropriate technical and professional aid. Finally it recommends certain experimental ways of promoting the wider public health, exemplified by Bangladesh, China and Cuba, with especial praise for village health workers. This is not all polemic, however, it is an eminently practical volume too.

*Department of Community Medicine,
University of Edinburgh*

UNA MACLEAN

Le Développement Spontané: Les Activités Informelles en Afrique, edited by M. Penouil and J.-P. Lachaud. Editions A. Pedone, Paris, 1985. 303 pp. 160 Fr.fr. ISBN 2 233 00156 7.

This contribution to studies of the 'informal economy' is a summary of ten years' research at the Centre d'Economie du Développement at Bordeaux I University. It is a general survey of the findings and conclusions of the research, without more than

a few details of the studies and their findings at Abidjan, Yaounde, Niamey, Fez and other places. Monographs published by the contributors to this volume give these details, e.g. many by Lachaud on Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Togo and other countries. The only chapters in this volume which deal at any length with the original research findings in Africa are those by Laval on Yaounde, by Baumann on rural enterprises (referring to the example of Saa in Cameroon), and by Chatein on tanners in Fez.

The generalized studies which otherwise fill the volume deal with the 'informal sector' in both urban and rural areas—the importance of rural non-agricultural small enterprises is stressed throughout. The 'informal sector' as studied includes both trading and various productive and repair activities—tailoring, vehicle repair, etc. All over Africa these activities grow up on the initiative of Africans, filling important needs. As this study stresses throughout, the informal sector creates jobs, supplies food and other basic goods, and provides services in ways which the modern sector cannot match for the benefit of ordinary Africans.

The idea (doubtless coming from 'dependencyists') that the informal sector can be explained as a sort of appendage to the modern sector is rightly rejected. Anywhere in Africa one can observe the growth of shops, bars, restaurants, mechanical work-yards, and tailors' shops, among many other small enterprises, by the initiative of African men and women. 'Spontaneous development' though this certainly is, and very useful to many, it has limited possibilities of expansion in some areas, and some weaknesses (such as common poor workmanship), which this study examines. But the contribution of the informal economy to Africa is immense—helping new urban immigrants in particular, adapting itself to low-income markets, and providing a quarter to a half of the jobs in many urban and rural areas.

There is extensive discussion here on the nature of informal sector employment; in particular, there are interesting comments (generalized, like everything else here) on apprenticeship, whose importance in Africa is evident. Wage labour is mentioned as being rare in this sector and, inevitably, ill-paid (but better, for some, than no job at all). The sources of capital, including contribution clubs, are discussed, as well as the scale of investment required (very small for some enterprises). Much is said about the relations between the informal and modern sectors; the large number of salaried workers who resign to start their own businesses is noted, but the limited patronizing of small enterprises by official agencies is cited as an obstacle to the enterprises' expansion. One general observation is that enterprises related to modern activity are the most respected and most viable, such as car and radio repairing.

Chapters VI and VII, by Scherpereel and Baumann, on rural areas are important. Scherpereel mentions Africa's insufficient overall food production, but warns against reliance on figures cited, and shows how rural living standards can be improved by small enterprises such as already exist, e.g. small-scale food processing and repair workshops for ploughs. Metalworkers, the concluding chapter says, are particularly important for rural development, while action to aid the rural economy as a whole can assist the informal sector.

The concluding chapter deals at some length with government policy. Noting that African governments are taking more interest in the informal economy than before, it examines policies adopted to help it, in Rwanda for example. Some are described as useful, and entrepreneurs themselves are said to welcome government aid of the right sort. But financial assistance, it is often stressed, is of limited use as the informal sector is largely self-financing and aid would favour the bigger enterprises. Private initiatives, by the churches for example, to encourage small enterprises are noted.

The research behind this study was in Francophone Africa. The research team might have done well to look at other areas, at something of the vast informal sector in Nigeria for example (one comment by Chatein on traditional crafts in Black Africa seems doubtfully applicable to Kano). However, the bibliography includes much of the abundant literature on the informal economy in Anglophone Africa.

As before, this reviewer wonders when the invention of the index will be made known in France. But the absence of an index is less important for this sort of work as it is a generalized one. One sees little here of the real life referred to—the life of Africa's myriad shops, bars and workshops. But this can be useful reading in conjunction with the monographs resulting from the Bordeaux research project.

London

JONATHAN DERRICK

Bwiti. An Ethnography of the Religious Imagination, by James W. Fernandez. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982. £63.20 hard back and £20.70 paper-back xxiv + 731 pp. ISBN 0 691 09390 3, and 0 691 10122 1.

Bwiti is a cult of revitalization. Born in the disturbed social margins of colonial Gabon, it has been both nurtured by the desire 'to ease the oppressive burden of everyday human experience' and energized by the fertile imaginations of its leaders. Its ritual and liturgy are composed of a rich amalgam of ideas, images and practices which have been drawn perceptively and creatively from a wide range of local African and Christian sources. Overall membership in Bwiti never seems to have exceeded 8 to 10 per cent of the Gabon population, so the significance of the movement is not to be calculated in terms of its demographic impact; on the other hand, it is an extraordinary example of the vitality of African religious expression.

Although Christian concepts and images appear in its liturgy, Bwiti is neither a separatist nor an independent church, but a revival and revitalization of various strands of local African religious ritual and practice. Its many tiny chapels are spread across Gabon and submit to no centralized authority. Each chapel is led by its own independent leader, who owes no allegiance to any superior. The similarities of ritual and practice which do exist among Bwiti chapels has emerged from the fact that new chapels are often established by individuals who have left existing chapels to form their own.

Bwiti, as Fernandez describes it, is less a religion than a religious process which is constantly in movement; it is a kind of organic institution whose leaders, those 'possessing religious imagination', draw upon the vast cultural 'inventory of images and ideas' available to them in order to inspire in their followers experiences of wholeness, of relatedness to others and to self, and of 'tranquilheartedness', which dissipate the feelings of despair which brought them to Bwiti in the first place. These experiences are induced during the all-night Bwiti rituals which consist of an extensive series of dances, songs and revelatory sermons and which together lead members down 'the path of life and death' into the land of the dead where they can be cleansed of their sins and revitalized through the secrets of the unknown. Initiation into Bwiti commences with a vision-quest in search of messages and signs from the ancestors through the ingestion of the psychoreactive substance, *eboga*. It seems clear from Fernandez's detailed presentation of Bwiti that its success and efficacy for members lies in their participation in such rituals, and from the actual feelings of 'tranquilheartedness' which they experience. In a word, the rituals are 'satisfying and rewarding'. And yet the emphasis in this study is upon ideas and images, upon 'the religious imagination'. What is the relationship in Bwiti between ideas and experience?

It would seem that Bwiti has very little appeal as a religious system or as an 'idea' *per se*. It is true that people join the cult in their desire to find redress for their own personal needs and longings. But initiation requires the eating of *eboga*, and the testimonies published by Fernandez about how individuals came to do this reveal their considerable scepticism and resistance. Often it would seem, the *eboga* is taken only as a result of the proddings of relatives or friends, and the initiates are convinced of the power of Bwiti only through the experience of the resultant visions (which do not occur in all cases). One of the published accounts is particularly explicit on this point:

I was a Christian but I found no truth in it. Christianity is the religion of the whites. It is the whites who have brought us the Cross and the Book. All the things in their religion one hears by the ears. But we Fang do not learn that way. We learn by the eyes, and *eboga* is the religion that enables us to see! (p. 481)

Conversion to Bwiti therefore takes place through confirming experience.

Ideas and images assume a more prominent role in the process of 'amazement' and 'edification through puzzlement' induced by the ritual performances of Bwiti. The aim of such rituals is to stir up the religious imagination of members and to enable them to surpass themselves. The power of the word is an essential element of this process. The leaders, in their expressive and elliptical discourse, creatively manipulate what Fernandez calls the sign-images of Fang culture, images which have 'powerfully significant associations and which can be used and ordered in various ways to rebuild the cosmic edifice—to return to the whole' (p. 9). The elliptical sermons of the leaders and the expressive language of the liturgy force the participants to reflect upon the meaning of the images employed, a process known in the Fang language as *osiman*. *Osiman* is defined by Fernandez as a kind of analogical thought 'which takes the present occurrence and projects it against the past in search of likenesses, similarities, analogies, allegories' (p. 342). These iconic and analogical images derive their meaning from the 'residue of past experience' in the context of immediate ritual performance. The religion of Bwiti is not doctrine but a dynamic process which has the power to reconcile in its participants the past with the present, the corporeal with the social, and the I with the Other (p. 8).

The great value of this book lies in Fernandez's detailed descriptions and perceptive analysis of this process. He succeeds in communicating something of the essential vitality of the religious experience of Bwiti through a careful examination of the microcosm of its everyday enactment. Bwiti has not developed a sweeping, inclusive theology; not has it been startlingly successful in recruiting a large membership. It is a minority religion, small, fragmented, contingent, and fragile. Institutionally, it is almost ephemeral; its chapels form around the personality of an effective leader and dissolve when the same leader dies or moves away. And yet, for those who participate in it, Bwiti ritual actually produces palpable feelings of reconciliation and 'tranquilheartedness'. Fernandez succeeds in demonstrating the power of these rituals by focusing a considerable portion of his study upon a few individuals in a few selected communities and congregations. He also provides his readers with a broad historical and sociological background to Bwiti, and traces the antecedents of some of its basic concepts with great skill, but it is through the highlighting of carefully selected details that he evokes the profound sense of the religious quest upon which the members of Bwiti have embarked.

West Africa and Christianity, by Peter B. Clarke. Arnold, London, 1986. 271 pp. £7.95 paperback. ISBN 0 7131 8263 6.

This account of the advance of Christianity in West Africa is primarily intended as a textbook for Higher School Certificate and university level students of West African history. It is fully documented and based on original research as well as on published sources, and it covers the whole West African region. Its comprehensive coverage and its compactness means it will have a wider usefulness than as a textbook, and will be a useful work of reference for historians of West Africa.

Only the briefest introduction to the area, its peoples, and their traditional religions is given, and the early modern period (15th–18th centuries) is dealt with only summarily. Chapters 2 to 5 are mainly concerned with giving a careful account of the spread of Christianity throughout the area, mentioning all the main mission societies, and discussing their methods. Rather less attention than one might have expected is paid to the work of African clergy and catechists (though Crowther and the Niger Delta Mission feature fairly prominently), and the approach chosen concentrates on movements rather than on the work of individuals. One senses that the writer is somewhat restricted by the requirements of examination syllabuses and by limitations of length. There is, nevertheless, a wealth of information in these chapters, and the references and bibliography will enable serious readers to pursue topics further.

The nature of the last four chapters permits of a more lively and discursive approach. The rise of the independent churches, and developments in the mission-founded churches since independence are dealt with in a manner which gives some insight into why people converted to Christianity and how it related to their felt needs. This is followed by a chapter dealing with the relations between Christianity on the one hand, and traditional African religions and Islam on the other: Clarke has a particular interest in this last (see his *West Africa and Islam*, Arnold, 1982), and much of value to say. We look forward to the publication of his new book, *The Christian Encounter with Islam*. There are useful discussions of how Christianity has related to nationalism and the state (though only scanty reference to the Nigerian Civil War), and a final chapter discusses wider aspects of the significance of religious change in West Africa.

Homerton College, Cambridge

M. LOUISE PIROUET

African Historiographies: What History for which Africa? edited by Bogumil Jewsiewicki and David Newbury. Sage Publications, London, 1986. 320 pp. £33 hardback. ISBN 0 8039 2498 4.

Twenty-five scholars have contributed to this volume of twenty-four essays, all but six of which were discussed at the Thirteenth Annual Conference of the Canadian Association of African Studies. This was held at Laval University in Quebec City in 1983. Two years earlier, Jewsiewicki (with the aid of Peter Gutkind, the editor of this Sage Series) invited thirty scholars, 'from many different regions of the continent (and from outside Africa) and from diverse intellectual traditions' (p. 7), to participate in a critical appraisal of recent developments in African historiography. For the editors, therefore, this book represents more than the publication of 'a simple collection of separate papers'. It reflects, more accurately, the outcome of a sustained exercise in scholarly 'collaboration and dialogue' (p. 8).

The essays are grouped into five sections. The first (and sadly, the shortest)

focuses upon the 'Epistemology of African Studies'. The next three contain reflections on, and reviews of, developments in oral historiography; imperial and Africanist historiographies ('Africa from the Outside') and national historiographies ('Africa from Within'). The last section, entitled 'Which way out? Trends in Developing Historiographies of Africa', is reserved for those contributions 'from Within', which are regarded (by the editors?) as 'potentially the most innovative' (p. 15) and relevant to the present and future needs of Africans.

Given the tenor of its underlying concern with 'the social and political conditions prevailing in the production of African history' (p. 7) and its wide-ranging scope, in terms of regional coverage and thematic focus, it should not prove too difficult for readers to list reservations about this book. For example, one might query the decision to provide three African states with two papers each, when the section dealing with the resilience of pre-1900 'epistemological categories' (p. 29) in post-1950 historiographies, was subjected to 'draconian reductions' (p. 8), due to publishing exigencies.

Such reservations are clearly outweighed, however, by the book's many positive features. As the outcome of the Quebec Conference, the book provides welcome insights into a decade of developments in francophone historiographies. Indeed, like Dakar (1961), Edinburgh (1974) and, shortly, Bad Homburg (1986), the published results of Quebec (1983) convincingly demonstrate the need for collaborative reflection, at the international level, on the historiography, as well as the history, of Africa. With the aid of the contributions in this important book, all historians of Africa might usefully attempt to confront Jewsiewicki's double-barrelled question: 'What history for which Africa?' (p. 13). This challenge could also help to discourage the usual temptation to raid the book for familiar authors or seemingly appropriate essays. To assist in this scholarly endeavour, the reviewer has avoided highlighting individual contributions at the expense of others.

North Staffordshire Polytechnic

RAY JENKINS

The Development of Capitalism in Northern Nigeria, by Robert Shenton. James Currey, London, 1986. xviii + 169 pp. £16.50 hardback, £7.95 paperback. ISBN 0 85255 002 2 and 0 85255 003 0.

This is a challenging, but uneven, book. It promises much, and is good in parts, but ultimately disappoints. Based on the author's PhD thesis for the University of Toronto, it is an attempt to develop a Marxist analysis of the colonial history of Northern Nigeria. Shenton takes as his starting-point Geoffrey Kay's oft-quoted comment that 'capitalism created under-development not simply because it has exploited the underdeveloped countries but because it has not exploited them enough'. He tries to support that argument (or is it to refute it?) by demonstrating that Northern Nigeria was underdeveloped because it was battered on to by a particular form of capital—merchant capital—which in a conservative manner tried 'to preserve rather than transform the pre-existing forces and social relations of production', but which 'actually worked to undermine the pre-existing social relations of production and in so doing to alter dramatically the manner in which that society was able to reproduce itself' (p. xiii). This antitheses between a capitalism which sought to preserve pre-capitalist societies but actually undermined them seems to turn on its head Marx's perception of a capitalism which sought first to undermine pre-capitalist societies and then to re-create them in the capitalist mould, and the book is probably intended as a neo-Marxist or dependency counterblast against the orthodox or classical Marxist position on the progressive nature of capitalism. The approach raises

fundamental conceptual and definitional problems, which cannot be discussed in a brief review. In my opinion, however, Shenton fails to substantiate his case even at the empirical level. In the main this is because he focuses much more on the upper than on the lower and middle reaches of the colonial polity and economy. Debates about administrative philosophies and techniques, relations between colonial officers and the indigenous ruling strata, the trend towards concentration and oligopsony among the firms engaged in exporting Northern Nigeria's groundnut crop, and the impact of the depression of the 1930s on official thinking about intervention—Shenton has much that is interesting to say on such matters. However, his case that British colonialism and capitalism transformed Northern Nigeria for the worse requires penetration of the *real* economy and society—the world of the farmer, trader, craftsman and labourer—which his sources, the records of government and 'big business', simply do not permit. Instead of adopting the field-work, survey and oral-tradition techniques which might yield hard data on trends among the great mass of the population, Shenton clings to 'history from above' and relies upon some scattered and impressionistic evidence, mainly on taxation and recurrent famines, to paint a picture of long-run impoverishment and social dislocation. Rhetoric and assertion, however, are no real substitute for detailed analysis. Demography, ecology, land allocation, agricultural techniques and productivity, income distribution, occupational specialization, infrastructural development, education and welfare are just some of the elements missing from Shenton's account. Their absence prevents any ready acceptance of his apocalyptic views that 'the commoditization of agricultural production of (*sic*) Northern Nigeria has reproduced rural society in a fundamentally different form and has given birth to the agricultural crisis Nigeria now faces', and that 'the success of colonialism may well come to be understood in terms of the dissolution of Northern Nigerian society itself' (p. 139).

Incidentally, the publisher's technique of printing 'rave reviews' on the cover would be far more effective if those who are quoted do not also turn out to be individuals whose assistance is acknowledged by the author.

University of Glasgow

J. FORBES MUNRO

Sol Plaatje: South African Nationalist 1876–1932, by Brian Willan. Heinemann, London, 1984. 436 pp. £19.50 hardback, £8.95 paper. ISBN 0 435 94872 5 and 94873 3. **Winnie Mandela: Part of My Soul**, edited by Anne Benjamin, adapted by Mary Benson. Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1985. 164 pp. £2.95. ISBN 0 14 008483 5. **Nelson Mandela**, by Mary Benson. Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1986. 269 pp. £2.50. ISBN 0 14 008941 1.

Of the three black leaders who are the subjects of these books, two—Nelson and Winnie Mandela—are internationally famous; the third, Sol Plaatje, who came from a previous generation before the eyes of the world were focused on South Africa, is virtually unknown. Yet Brian Willan's excellent biography of Plaatje explains much of South Africa's current tragedy.

Willan has succeeded admirably in striking a balance between Plaatje's private and public lives and the political circumstances in which he pursued his career. The values that shaped Plaatje's life can be traced in his childhood and youth—the Christian background of his family and education, his precocious academic ability, and the help he received from whites as well as blacks. Among his other gifts Plaatje was an excellent linguist and this led to employment as a court interpreter at Mafeking, where he kept a diary during the famous siege. His abilities and charm

continued to pick him out and led to editorship of newspapers and political leadership, as a founder member of the African Native Congress. His upbringing and experiences gave him a strong commitment to the legal system, the Cape liberal tradition and the belief that men (white and black) were open to rational argument. Willan quotes John Dube who said that 'If Mr Plaatje had had his own way, he would have torn up the Union constitution and re-enacted the old Cape constitution' (p. 166). Despite his increasing bitterness over the withdrawal of rights for Africans and in particular legislation depriving them of their land rights, Plaatje never lost these beliefs. Nor did he lose his abilities to hold audiences, whether they be in Mafeking, London, or Boston, and to establish good relations with a wide range of people.

However, the question which hangs over Plaatje's political career is 'What did he achieve?' For all his ability, for all his charm, and his contacts, and his newspaper editorials and books, what came of it? The blunt answer is very little. In the political arena the lesson of Plaatje's political career is one that Nelson Mandela stated so eloquently at his trial—peaceful protest and appeal to reason had failed to gain black men basic rights in their own country. While Mandela stated it publicly Plaatje may consciously or unconsciously have demonstrated it in his personal behaviour. He spent many years abroad, often living in discomfort, perpetually short of funds, and cut off from his family for whom he had a genuine regard, but who struggled to survive in his absence. Plaatje said that he was helping the case of blacks at home by promoting international concern about their plight. Perhaps it was that, or perhaps it was personal vanity at the warm response he received at his public meetings, but what seems more probable is that he had lost his way politically, and escaped abroad (and later in language studies) from the harsh reality that the Cape liberal tradition was falling before the combined assault of racism and authoritarian rule. What options did that leave a man who had no sympathy with 'agitators' and certainly not with violence against the state? The answer is none and so Plaatje escaped in foreign travel and language studies.

The fruits of this political inheritance are found in the books about the Mandelas, particularly Winnie Mandela's edited articles. They are written with great simplicity and power, as she draws directly on her experiences to show how the indignities and injustice of apartheid radicalized her. She writes of her brief married life with Nelson and more of her experiences in Brandfort where she was banned for several years, and found kindness from a few whites as well blacks. Yet she concludes that the gulf between black and white is now so wide that 'the black thinking is: if a white man says something is bad, then it must be very good' (p. 26), and declares that the possibility of dialogue is closed. Black political leaders moved a long way from Sol Plaatje's hopes and values. Even today would he have advocated violence? Would he like the Mandelas have concluded that no other course was open? Certainly Nelson Mandela's speech from the dock, which is quoted at length in Mary Benson's outline of his life, makes a compelling case, but in the long term South Africa may require Plaatje's liberal commitment as well as the Mandelas' burning conviction.

Hatfield College, Durham

JAMES BARBER

A History of the Ngonde Kingdom of Malawi, by Owen J. M. Kalinga. Studies in the Social Sciences 45. Mouton, Amsterdam, 1985. vii+175 pp. DM 95. ISBN 3 11 009627 7.

Few African states of the late nineteenth century obtained such a good press from European travellers as did the Ngonde kingdom of northern Malawi. With its

spotless villages, thriving herds of cattle, fertile banana groves and charming well-decorated houses, Ungonde stood out as an oasis of peace and prosperity in a desert of human devastation. No doubt British responses to the ferocious assault launched on the Ngonde by Swahili traders in 1887 were conditioned in large part by economic and strategic considerations, but there was also an element of outrage at the destruction of an African Arcadia.

In this study, a revised version of a London PhD thesis completed in 1974, Owen Kalinga employs a combination of oral traditions, archaeological evidence and written sources (available only from the late 1870s) to trace the history of the kingdom from its distant origins prior to the take over by the Kyungu dynasty around 1600 through to the Karonga War of the late 1880s. Like Godfrey Wilson in *The Constitution of Ngonde*, published in 1939, he ascribes considerable importance to the religious function of the Kyungu as a 'divine king', secluded from his subjects and holding the well-being of the land in his person. But whereas Wilson argued that it was involvement in the ivory trade that allowed the Kyungu to emerge as an important secular force in the nineteenth century, Kalinga shows that the appearance of a secularly powerful monarchy preceded any involvement of the Ngonde in the ivory trade and was unrelated to it. Rather he points to environmental and domestic factors—the relatively high rainfall and fertile conditions of the Karonga plain, initiatives taken by outstanding Ngonde leaders—in explaining both the initial emergence of a highly centralized kingdom and the later shift in the balance of power to the Kyungu from their *makambala* or councillors. There is also a detailed account of Ngonde external relations in the decades leading up to the Karonga war, notable for the light it throws on the role played by individual African elephant-hunters in attracting the Swahili to Ungonde.

The limitations of the book derive in part from the historiographical climate in which it was conceived. Like several other pre-colonial studies written in the early 1970s, it focuses almost exclusively on the political activities of the ruling elite and has little to say on other less privileged groups. There is virtually nothing on the operation of the domestic economy, even on the role of cattle-keeping which, as Kalinga has demonstrated elsewhere, was central to Ngonde society. All the same, the book is to be welcomed as a useful contribution to our understanding of Malawi's pre-colonial history, the first of a number of regional studies likely to be published over the next few years. It is to be hoped that later authors will fare better with their publishers than Kalinga has done with his. Not only is the book excessively expensive, it is littered with misprints and mistakes that should have been eradicated as a matter of course by any self-respecting editor. The economies of publishing may tell against a specialist study of this type. But that is no excuse for treating it in so cavalier a fashion.

University of Stirling

JOHN MCCrackEN

Language and Colonial Power: the appropriation of Swahili in the former Belgian Congo 1880–1938, by Johannes Fabian. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1986. viii + 206 pp. £25.00 (\$39.50) hardback. ISBN 0 521 30870 4.

The author, probably best known for his *Jamaa, a charismatic movement in Katanga* (1970), turns his attention in the present book to another feature of southern Zaire's Shaba region. His quest is to explain how Swahili came to be adopted as the colonial lingua franca in an area of apparently stable multi-linguists.

Shunning the usual search for 'origins' as to the arrival of Swahili in Katanga, with its emphasis upon the 'when? where? and by what means?', Fabian prefers to ask the

questions, 'Why?' and 'In what form?', and to answer these questions not so much as a linguistic theorist as a socio-political historian. He argues that linear, evolutionary explanations of linguistic development (already open to grave question) are patently inadequate when it comes to Shaba Swahili. Instead, his approach is 'processual', that is, it is concerned with different spheres of influence, the complex interplay of diverse factors, historical, political, socio-economic, demographic and ecological as they affect language.

Fabian's sources are correspondingly many and various, ranging from the early polyglot wordlists of explorers and military men, missionary manuals and correspondence, colonial questionnaires, language guides and teaching aids, to (importantly in Fabian's opinion) documents relating to labour policies in the increasingly industrialized mining areas of Shaba. From all these sources a picture emerges that situates the pivotal period for Swahili not back in the 1880s, but rather between 1910 and 1920. Communication with the colonized was one of the preconditions for colonial power, and language use and control represented one foundation on which military, ideological and economic regimes were built. Swahili provided the new Belgian colony with a northward-orientated alternative to the threatening presence of English and Kitchen-Kaffir advancing from the south, and this politically motivated choice had powerful economic and technological dimensions in the Belgianization of Elizabethville and the labour recruitment of the mineworkers.

Of interest to the author is not only Swahili's dominance as the major vehicular language of Katanga, but also the particular form the language came to take. The need to communicate and the intent to control became inseparable colonial motives. Lexical reduction in the form of pidginization reflected not mere geographical distance from East Coast (classical) Swahili, but rather the inequality of relations between European personnel and African workers, the enactment of power in a hierarchical organization, where language was reduced in its role from communication to command.

Inevitably, as the author himself admits, the book has its share of conjecture and intelligent guess. It could hardly be otherwise where there are so many interplaying factors and where documentation, especially of the spoken language, is problematic. He does, however, show convincingly how language contributed to the typical colonial predicament which at one and the same time sought to develop the country to make it profitable but had to retard it so that it stayed under control.

School of Oriental and African Studies, London

GORDON MOLYNEUX

Angola's Political Economy 1975-1985, by M. R. Bhagavan. The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies (Research Report No. 75), Uppsala 1986. 89 pp. 30 Sw. Kr. ISBN 91 7106 248 3.

Angola: Politics, Economics and Society, by Keith Somerville. Frances Pinter, London, 1986. xx + 207 pp. £17.50 hardback, £6.95 paperback. ISBN 0 86187 394 7 and 0 86187 395 5.

Any new publication on contemporary Angola should be welcome, given the paucity of information on this most secretive of African régimes, but it is hard to extend a welcome to Keith Somerville's dismal little book. The general editor of this disappointing series on Marxist régimes, Bogdan Szajkowski, claims in his preface that this is 'the first full account of socialist development of Angola', in spite of the citation in the bibliography of Wolfers and Bergerol's considerably better study dating from 1983. The perusal of Somerville's bibliography and references comes as a shock, for the only foreign language source quoted is some obscure serial in

Russian. That the author should have ignored the impressive set of publications in French and German on Angola over the last decade is bad enough, but not to quote a single source in Portuguese is inadmissible. To add insult to injury, there are gaping holes in the references in English, most obviously Franz Wilhelm Heimer's brilliant study of decolonization in Angola. Finally, Somerville never seems to have been in Angola himself, or, if he has, he disguises it remarkably effectively. Not surprisingly, the result is a superficial, repetitive, uninformative work, full of errors and omissions. The author's main objective seems to be to persuade the Kremlin that the MPLA are genuine Marxist-Leninists, and that their problems are due only to South African destabilization and a shortage of trained cadres. Perhaps Soviet libraries will be interested in purchasing this book, but any Western librarian wanting to fill a gap on Angola would be better advised to get a back copy of Wolfers and Bergerol's book, for all its shortcomings.

Bhagavan's more narrowly focused pamphlet shares some of the deficiencies of Somerville's work, but overall it is a great deal more interesting and valuable. Bhagavan has used sources in Portuguese and travelled to Angola in 1983, although he also fails to cite the French and German books, and does not refer to Heimer's work. The historical sketch with which he opens is thus very dated and full of errors, reflecting the militant anti-Portuguese literature of the 1960s rather than more recent research. The third section on the politics of the situation, including suggestions for change, resembles Somerville in style, written in the wooden Leninist 'newspeak' of support groups around the world. However, it briefly comes to life with a sparkling attack on the bureaucratic nightmare that Angola has become, with the eminently quotable judgement that the country has 'hierarchy without authority'.

By far the best section is the central one, on the present economic crisis. The paragraphs devoted to the 'mythical currency' of Angola are particularly illuminating, showing how an economy can rapidly slip down the slope of demonetization. The description of the four levels of shops, available according to status, contains sad echoes of *Animal Farm*. There is a brief mention of the important but neglected phenomenon of the steady outflow of skilled Angolans in the 1980s, officially estimated at 5,000 to 10,000 a year, who are fleeing the economic mess in the country. They are probably also pushed out by the continual purges and general insecurity, though Bhagavan insists rather on their élitist desire for more money. Finally, he has scraped together the meagre statistics which the régime releases and which he was able to collect on his field trip in 1983, and put them together in useful statistical appendices. However, the postscripts covering 1984 and 1985 are less informative. For all its faults, this is required reading for anybody wishing to understand how Angola has got itself into such an economic disaster in spite of its oil wealth.

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GERVASE CLARENCE-SMITH

Sugar Processing: The Development of a Third World Technology, by Raphael Kaplinsky. Intermediate Technology Publications, London, 1984. x+148 pp. £4.95. ISBN 0 903031 98 1.

This book is focused on two questions: indigenous technological development in a Less Developed Country, and technology transfer from one LDC to another, using sugar production, India and Kenya for the case study.

Dr Kaplinsky describes how Indian engineers have developed the smaller-scale sugar technology to a point where it has the *potential* to challenge the production

costs of the larger-scale technology. This contradicts arguments that 'intermediate technology' is 'undynamic', and provides support for productivity enhancement in entire LDC economies, rather than restricted to modern 'enclaves'. Detailed improvements discussed in smaller-scale technical (and economic) efficiency cover sucrose extraction (slicer/expeller replacing cane knives/mill rollers) and juice boiling (advanced 'shell' furnaces).

The smaller-scale technology is more labour-intensive than the larger-scale, is comparatively capital-saving, has potentially better 'linkage' effects through LDC equipment production, but has had poor raw material and energy utilization. The developments described in the book have the potential to reduce the two disadvantages. However, for a country like Kenya 120 small-scale plants would be required to produce the same 1982 output as seven large-scale plants. *Inter alia*, the implications of these alternatives on scarce skilled and semi-skilled labour requirements would bear closer scrutiny than Dr Kaplinsky provides.

The book falls short of expectations in several respects. First, results of the production cost/profitability calculations are not tabulated clearly in summary form. Indeed, from the information given the reader cannot even compile summary tables himself. Second, the major issues raised by technology transfer from one LDC (India) to another (Kenya) are not thoroughly discussed. In the late 1970s Indian expatriates were involved in the introduction of the small-scale sugar technology into Kenya—suggesting, for example, exploration of 'South-South' technology transfer. Third, technical data on which analysis of recent small-scale technology developments is based arises from experimental work rather than commercial applications—implying that fuller judgement will have to await sustained 'proving' operations.

The book confirms Frances Stewart's introductory remarks: '... policies towards the price of sugar (processed and raw), towards imports, towards depreciation allowances, credit and interest rates each affect private profitability of alternative technologies in important ways. Actual choice is then highly dependent on those government interventions, which may promote or hinder appropriate choice' (p. 2). For serious students of technology choice in LDCs the book is essential reading, even if critical reading is more than usually appropriate.

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BOOK NOTES

Africa South of the Sahara 1987 (Europa Publications, 1986). 1141 pp. £56. ISBN 0 946653 21 6.

The sixteenth edition of this well established, reliable and essential work of reference. Part One provides a brief 'Background to the Continent', Part Two looks at 'Regional Organizations', and Part Three, the longest section, contains a survey of each country from Angola to Zimbabwe.

Report on Workshops organized by the Non-Government Organization Inter-African Committee, Geneva, on **Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children in Africa** (Female Genital Excision and Infibulation—'Female Circumcision'), by Lilian Passmore Sanderson (available from Dr Sanderson, 2 Alder Close, Englefield Green, Surrey TW20 0LU, England; no price given), 91 pp. typescript.

Details of the reports emanating from two conferences in Nairobi in July 1985—the UN Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace conference, and the World Meeting for Women.

Imperial War Museum Review No. 1 1986 (Imperial War Museum, London. £5.95), a 112 pp. well-produced journal, this first issue serving as a 'showcase for the Museum'. Among the articles on recent acquisitions, exhibits, archives and current research are two of special interest to Africanists: Anne Fleming's 'Spear against aeroplane: the making of Lutz Becker's *Lion of Judah*', the splendid 1981 film about the Italian conquest of Ethiopia which was shown at the ASUK conference in Canterbury last September, and Clive Coultass' article on '*Tunisian Victory*: a film too late?', the joint British—United States official film on the North African campaign.

The Africa New Cookbook: African Cooking for Western Kitchens, edited by Tami Hultman. Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1986. 175 pp. £5.95. ISBN 0 14 046 7513.

Since cookery books are produced these days for every interest, field and culture, from ballet-lovers to Mexicans, perhaps it is time that a cookery review appeared in the *Journal*. This one, first published in the United States, is aimed at North American kitchens. Some of the information, addresses of aid agencies and book references, for example, are American. However, the data on Africa, its peoples, their food and cooking is of general interest and the recipes themselves are easily usable by British cooks as well, since alternative ingredients are given for rarer items, and the measurements are more or less a combination of British and American.

The recipes are grouped by type, i.e. meat, vegetarian dishes, salads, seafoods, etc. Some explanation and context is given where necessary with country of origin. Now that sub-tropical and tropical fruits and vegetables are widely available in the United Kingdom, with this book it would be possible to recreate a reasonably authentic taste of Africa.

Cameroon, by Mark W. Delancy and Peter H. Schraeder. World Bibliographical Series No. 63, Clio Press, Oxford, 1986. xxvi+201 pp. £27.50. ISBN 1 85109 006 1.

In common with the other books in this series only published works are listed among the just over 500 items here, including whole books, chapters of collective volumes, and articles, mostly published in Cameroon itself, France, Britain and the United States. A number of works in German are missing. However, the major books on Cameroon seem to be here, and it is good that included are works published by their own authors in Cameroon and readable there at least, such as M. Z. Njeuma's *Fulani hegemony in Yola* and P. M. Kale's *Political evolution in the Cameroons*. There are some misprints, and one can query the omission of the French book *Bandjoun* by Fr. A. Albert (1937) while what seems to be its English version is included; and the description of Meinrad Hebga, author of *Sorcellerie, chimère dangereuse . . .*, merely as 'a Christian, with extensive training in Catholic educational institutions' when he is in fact a leading Jesuit priest. The introduction is defective on colonial and recent history; such an introduction need not be long but it can have more useful data than this one.

Modernization in the Sudan: Essays in Honor of Richard Hill, edited by M. W. Daly. Lillian Barber Press, New York, 1985. 177 pp. £21. ISBN 0 936508 11 6.

This collection is an honour richly deserved by Richard Hill both for his many significant writings on Sudan and his archival work. The first three essays are on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, about which Richard Hill wrote particularly: they comprise Jay Saulding on the end of Nubian kingship, Terence Walz on the paper trade in Egypt and Sudan, and Mohammad Said Gaddal on religion in the changing socio-political structure. Two of Richard Hill's fellow servants of the Sudan Government, S. R. Simpson and Andrew Cruikshank, follow on town planning and medicine respectively; while the condominium is also the context for Lidwien Kapteijns on women in western Sudan, and G. N. Sanderson on economic policies in the 1930s. The south is the setting for Douglas Johnson on Nuer prophecies, R. O. Collins on the Jonglei canal, and Francis Mading Deng on development and integration. Appropriately the essays close with L. E. Forbes on the Sudan Archive, Durham, founded by Richard Hill.

Brandenburg Sources for West African History 1680-1700, edited by Adam Jones. Studien Zur Kulturkunde 77, Franz Steiner Vg., Stuttgart, 1985. xiv+356 pp. DM 82. ISBN 3 515 04315 2.

The Brandenburg African Company, created in 1680 and subsidized by the Elector, briefly held four forts on the West African coast, three on the Gold Coast (the site of one as yet unidentified) and one at Arguin. Faced with limited trade and profits in gold and ivory the Brandenburgers also turned to supplying slaves to the Danish Caribbean Island of St Thomas. With few ships and in face of growing competition the Brandenburg state sold out to the Dutch in 1720. Dr Jones' carefully edited collection of ninety-one documents, drawn from Dutch and German archives (the original texts form Appendix A) cover half the life of the German company. Consisting in the main of agreements, reports and inventories they add to our knowledge of European activity on the west coast but have relatively little to say about African societies, politics, and economics. Maps, illustrations, bibliography and a thorough index complete this useful volume.

The Biography of Madugu Mohammad Mai Gashin Baki, by E. R. Flegel (Hamburg, 1885), translated and annotated by M. B. Duffill. Crossroads Press, University of California, Los Angeles, 1985. 52 pp. \$7.00. ISBN 0 918 456 52 5.

Biographies of ordinary Africans in the nineteenth century are comparatively rare so it is good to have an English edition, extensively annotated, of Flegel's twenty page life of Madugu Mohammad (c. 1828–c. 1915). As a trader and caravan leader Madugu Mohammad's life story contains much that is useful about the economic and social history of the Adamawa and Benue valley region.

Double Impact. France and Africa in the Age of Imperialism, edited by G. Wesley Johnson. Greenwood Press, Westport, Conn., and London, 1985. pp. xiv + 403. £55. ISBN 0 313 23386 1.

The double impact, the 'mutual interaction between societies in an imperial setting', perhaps more pursued by scholars for Europe and the Orient, provides fascinating dimensions also for Africa. The twenty-two essays here vary greatly in quality and range from rather pedestrian treatment of the economics of imperialism, to the military, politics, elites, art and architecture, literature, race and education. Some of these papers are lack-lustre, old stories in new covers; a few provide new and stimulating direction, for example, Sabatier on 'Did Africans really learn to be French?' a study of the École William Ponty, Betts on French colonial architecture and urban planning in sub-Saharan Africa, Prussin on the image of African architecture in France, the two chapters on the mutual impact of art, Cohen on French racism, and Burke's paper on Thomas Ismail Urbain, a nineteenth century Afro-European opponent of French settler dominance in Algeria.

C. W. de Kiewiet. Historian of South Africa, by Christopher Saunders. Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town Communications No. 10, 1986. 79 pp. no price given. ISBN 0 7992 1027 7.

An assessment of the life and work of de Kiewiet (1902–86) whose two most significant books—*The Imperial Factor* (1937) and *History of South Africa Social and Economic* (1941)—played a major role, along with the writings of W. W. Macmillan, in overturning the Theal-Cory view of South Africa's past. De Kiewiet, from academic positions in the United States (he never held a post in the land of his childhood and his scholarly attention), helped place blacks within the history of South Africa, and directed serious attention to the racial inter-relationship key to that country's economic and social history.

Quo Vadis Africa? Letters from Ghana Prison, 1972, by Kwame Safo-Adu. Vantage Press, New York, 1985 xiii + 63 pp. \$7.95. ISBN 533 05941 0.

A cry for a multi-party democratic system of government, in the form of six brief letters written from prison, by the former minister of agriculture in the 857 day Busia Government overthrown by the military coup of 1972. Dr Safo-Adu argues that the then current leadership in Africa had a 'core of savagery and coarseness', and that the continent's only real hope is with a multi-party system of government, if necessary the parties initially sustained by public finance.

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April-June 1986

by R. J. TOWNSEND

Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Oxford

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REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST DEVELOPMENT IN ETHIOPIA

CHRISTOPHER CLAPHAM

DESPITE the high level of recent interest in revolutionary socialist development strategies in Africa, and indeed in the third world generally, the case of Ethiopia has been very largely neglected. This neglect may be due partly to lack of information; Ethiopia has not been an easy country to work in and has not sought to attract Western Marxist scholars. Much of the Western interest in Ethiopia, too, has been pre-empted by the immediate crisis of famine and by issues of international alignment and regional conflict. But to a large extent, I suspect that this neglect is due to a persistent reluctance on the part of Western Marxists to regard Ethiopia as a case of 'genuine' revolutionary socialist development. It has certainly failed to attract the sympathetic response which any radical African regime normally triggers from academics on the Western left, who may well reckon that both the level of internal repression which Ethiopia has suffered since the 1974 revolution (much of it directed against groups which themselves claim to be socialist) and the evident economic failure indicated by famine make it easiest to 'write off' Ethiopia as not being a socialist experiment at all.

Despite this, I would argue that Ethiopia *must* be seen as a classic revolutionary socialist state, that the Ethiopian government has committed itself to a Marxist-Leninist development strategy and political structure, both of which have been pursued with consistency and determination, and that the outcome provides a striking example of what Barry Munslow has recently referred to as the 'problems in the transition to socialism' in Africa.¹ This article seeks to outline, in a necessarily generalized and provisional way, the main lines of revolutionary development policy and the outcomes to which it has led.

Socialism in Ethiopia

In another recent book on revolutionary socialist development in the third world, Gordon White has outlined certain basic structural characteristics of the societies, which may be termed socialist:

First, they have broken—in most cases decisively—the autonomous power of private capital over politics, production and distribution,

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1. B. Munslow, (ed.), *Africa: Problems in the Transition to Socialism* (London, Zed, 1986).

abrogated the dominance of the law of value in its capitalist form, and embarked upon a development path which does not rely on the dynamic of private ownership and entrepreneurship. Second, they have brought about (or are bringing about) certain fundamental transformations—in the economic, political and social realms—which reflect the long-standing aspirations of revolutionary socialist movements everywhere, and the basic principles of the founding fathers of 'scientific socialism': most notably, the nationalisation of industry, socialisation of agriculture, abolition or limitation of markets, and the establishment of a comprehensive planning structure and a politico-ideological system bent on the transition to an ultimate communist society.²

The significance of this catalogue is that *all* of the elements in it have been realised, or are well on the way to being realised, in Ethiopia; and that revolutionary Ethiopia must be seen, not just as doubtfully or marginally socialist, but as a paradigm case of what revolutionary socialist development may be expected to achieve, at any rate in one of the poorest and least developed of African states.

Many of the measures which set Ethiopia firmly on this path were taken within a year of the establishment of the new regime in September 1974. All major industrial, financial and commercial institutions, encompassing some two hundred companies, were nationalized without compensation in January and February 1975, and the very limited role of private capital in the economy was defined in the comprehensively entitled Government Ownership and Control of the Means of Production Proclamation of March 1975. The wholesale nationalization of foreign capital was made easier by the fact that there was not much of it anyhow, and in particular there was virtually no mineral extraction. Multinational investment was largely restricted to commerce, plantation agriculture (notably sugar and cotton), and a little industry. Though limited compensation was later agreed for some of the nationalized assets, and the government made some attempts to attract new private investment, none has yet been forthcoming.

Foreign capital has thus been more decisively restricted than in Angola, which continues to rely on multinationals for mineral extraction, or even Mozambique with its export of labour to South Africa.

Much more important, though, was the nationalization of all rural land in April 1975. Large plantations and commercial farms, which then accounted only for some one per cent of cultivated land, were directly taken over as state farms, again without compensation. By far the greater part of the cultivated area was evenly distributed between the peasants who farmed it, and all rents, dues and share-cropping arrangements were abolished.

2. G. White, R. Murray & C. White, (eds.), *Revolutionary Socialist Development in the Third World* (Brighton, Wheatsheaf, 1983), p. 1.

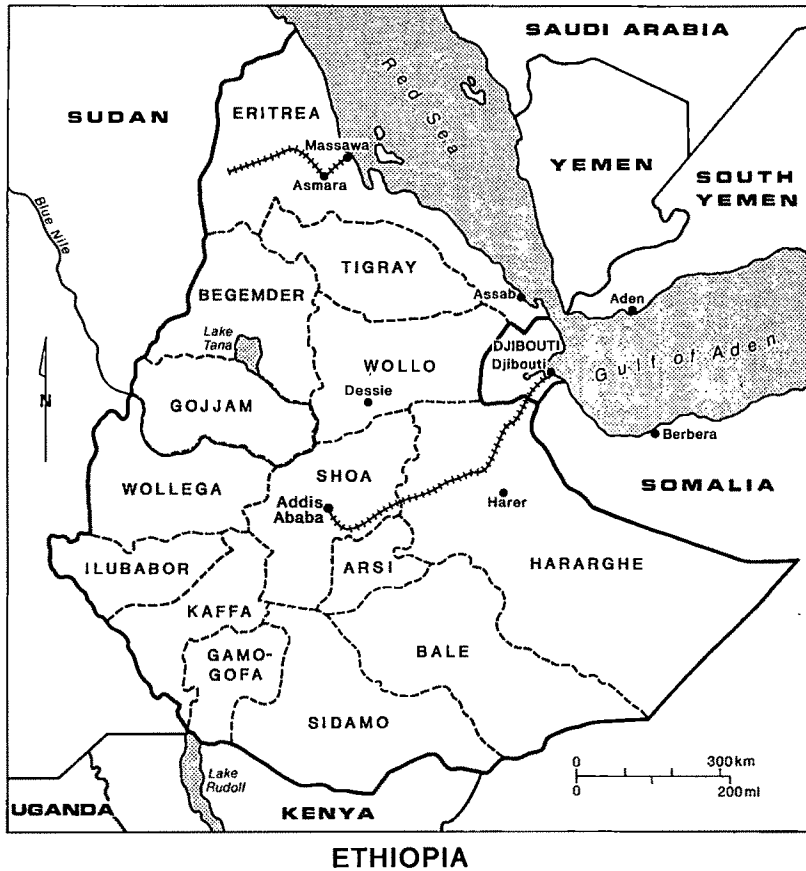
Because the land itself was nationalized, however, cultivators were allowed only use rights over individual plots, with regular redistributions to ensure equality and prevent the emergence of a kulak class. Finally, in July 1975, all urban land was likewise nationalized, along with 'extra' houses, allowing homeowners to retain only a single residence for their own use. This destroyed the rentier class in the towns, just as rural land reform had destroyed the landlord class in the countryside. The government both reduced rents and appropriated them for itself, largely through the new urban dwellers' associations or *kebelles*; these associations, grouping together communities of a few thousand people each, nominally permitted town dwellers to administer themselves, but swiftly developed into indispensable agencies for urban political control, responsible for neighbourhood policing, food rationing, military conscription and a variety of social services, in addition to their original function of collecting rents.

The remaining items on White's list were realized after the regime had survived its early traumas, and stabilized under the leadership of Mengistu Haile-Mariam from 1978 onwards. The creation of a state distribution system got under way from 1978, although no attempt has been made to abolish private petty trade and in critical areas such as grain marketing this coexists with the state system. Annual production campaigns from 1978 onwards preceded the introduction of comprehensive planning in 1984. The long and difficult process of establishing a Leninist political party likewise culminated in the formation of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia in 1984, while the socialization of agriculture is still under way.

A periodisation of the Revolutionary Regime

Before going on to discuss a number of aspects of development policy in greater detail, it may be helpful to outline the main periods in the revolutionary experience so far.

The first or mobilization period, from 1974 through to 1978, was one of intense conflict and violence, involving not only the overthrow of the old regime, but also the struggle for power among groups of would-be successors and the defeat of the Somali invasion of 1977/78. During this period, the government's overriding concern was for physical survival and political control, and the economy (especially in the towns) was badly disrupted. The urban cost of living rose at a rate of nearly 20 per cent a year, while salaries were unchanged and urban living standards dropped sharply. Particularly important was the disruption of rural-urban food marketing, caused by land reform as well as by civil war, which led to periods of near starvation in Addis Ababa and which had to be met by food imports. In the countryside, food production increased for a couple of years after land reform and former tenants (who were the great beneficiaries of a land reform abolishing share-cropping arrangements which had often removed half of



the tenants' crops for sale in the towns) for the most part simply ate the extra food themselves. The one real bonus of the period was a boom in international coffee prices which helped to insulate the regime at a critical moment from the pressures of the international economy.

This initial disruption is part of the common experience of revolutionary regimes. It means that almost every revolutionary regime has to start rebuilding the economy from a level appreciably lower than that attained under the previous government, while the process of creating new institutions inevitably causes further disruption in itself. Although it is obviously unfair to judge any revolutionary development strategy on the basis of its first few years, it is nonetheless appropriate to set any subsequent gains against the initial losses that revolution itself entails.

The second or campaign period can be dated from Mengistu Haile-Mariam's Revolution Day speech in September 1978 to the foundation of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE) exactly six years later. By this time, the government effectively controlled almost the entire national territory, except for the insurgent areas of Eritrea and Tigray, and it was possible to set in train a process of economic reconstruction. The ethos of the period is aptly summed up in a contemporary masthead slogan from *The Ethiopian Herald*, 'We Will Liquidate the Evil Legacies of the Past and Place Nature under Our Control'. The emphasis was on purposive government-directed action; Mengistu's initial speech was notable for its outspoken attack on the 'petty bourgeois' inclinations of the peasantry and for its commitment to the collectivisation of agriculture. This in turn reflects the consolidation of the Soviet alliance, the large number of cadres (amounting to several thousand) being trained in the Soviet Union and other socialist states, and a readiness to look to Soviet models in the economy as well as in political organisation.

Despite the establishment of a Central Planning Supreme Council in October 1978, development was pursued not through any comprehensive plan but through the successive annual National Revolutionary Production and Cultural Development Campaigns, launched from late 1978 onwards. 'Production task forces' were recruited from the Addis Ababa lumpen-proletariat and, after a brief training period, armed with tractors and sent off to the countryside. Superambitious targets were set, but without any ordering of available resources to meet them. The area under state farms was sharply increased, largely by bringing marginal and sparsely inhabited lands into permanent cultivation, resulting in an increase in the state farm acreage to about 3.3 per cent of the national total. Once and for all increases in industrial production were achieved by reviving existing underutilized capacity, much of which had lain idle for the previous five years, but new investment was slight and heavily concentrated in a few projects. This campaign, aided by good weather, produced a 5 per cent per annum increase in GDP over its first two years, but the rate of increase then fell off very sharply, as industrial capacity was taken up and agriculture moved into a disastrous downward spiral. International coffee prices slowly declined and the balance of payments deficit steadily increased, from 309 million birr³ in 1979 to 977 million birr in 1983, by which time published exports covered only 46 per cent of imports.

The third or plan period dates from September 1984 and the deliberate establishment of an integrated set of Soviet-style institutions. The two most evident of these are the WPE itself and the Office of the National Committee for Central Planning (ONCCP, replacing the previous Supreme Council), which launched the Ten Year Indicative Plan to coincide with the celebrations of the tenth anniversary of the revolution in September 1984.

3. The birr is maintained at an official exchange rate against the US dollar of \$1 = 2.07 birr.

Along with these went a structure of Working People's Control Committees and, especially from 1985, much more intensive measures to secure the collectivisation of agriculture.

The Ten Year Plan was broken down into plan periods of two, three and five years, and accompanied by machinery to draw up detailed annual targets; a team of seven Soviet Gosplan advisers were attached to the ONCCP. One might well question, even so, whether this should really qualify as socialist planning, since the plan itself is made up of poorly related sectoral plans, while the plan target of 6.5 per cent per annum growth over the ten years, though scaled down in drafting from an initial 10 per cent, is way beyond any possibility of achievement. On top of that, the launching of the plan precisely coincided with the great famine of 1984, as a result of which national efforts from October 1984 onwards were directed to the emergency. The launching of the second (three year) plan period in September 1986 may prove a more appropriate date for the start of comprehensive planning.

The Plan is nonetheless an important document, not only in showing how the Ethiopian government thinks of economic strategy, but equally as a guide to what the government actually does, insofar as it has the capacity to implement it. Here it must be borne in mind that the domestic control capacity of the Ethiopian regime is very impressive indeed. The concentration in Western coverage of Ethiopia on the famine and on the wars in Tigray and Eritrea (both of them regions of marginal economic importance—save for the critically important Assab port, which falls outside the war zone) have given the impression of a government like those of Mozambique or Angola, which is scarcely able to control its own territory, let alone implement far-reaching measures of economic transformation. This is very far from the case. In most of the surplus producing areas, both for grain (notably Shoa, Gojjam and Arsi) and for coffee (notably Kaffa, Sidamo and Gamo Gofa) government control is effectively unchallenged, as likewise it is in the towns. The regime has means at its disposal to implement policy, especially through the peasants' associations in the countryside and the *kebelles* in the towns, both now firmly under the direction of the WPE; these go well beyond anything available to the pre-revolutionary government. The villagisation campaign discussed below is the most striking evidence of this capacity. The Plan may thus provide a valid starting point for discussion of the three key areas of economic policy: the role of the international economy, the urban and industrial strategy, and, especially, agricultural policy.

The external economy

The Plan makes it clear that, despite a very large (indeed unattainable) projected increase in domestic savings from 3.4 to 15 per cent of GDP over

the ten year period, much of the capital requirement would have to come from abroad. It envisages an increase (again over the ten years from 1983/84 to 1993/94) from 220.0 to 714.4 million birr in official grants, from 516.0 to 1609.5 million birr in net loans, and from nothing to 800 million birr in joint venture private investment.⁴ Soviet sources have made it clear that by far the greater part of this sum would have to come from the capitalist economies.⁵ Not only is this amount, on any plausible scenario, entirely unattainable, but it would even, if realized, land Ethiopia in insuperable debt problems and even then could not be expected to generate the level of growth that the Plan calls for.⁶ As a means of directing the overall development of the economy, the Plan is thus flawed at its base, and the importance of its foreign exchange provisions lies largely in indicating that no dramatic change is called for in Ethiopia's international economic alignment.

Ethiopia is a classic African underdeveloped economy, save that it has no mineral sector and hence no powerful multinationals. It depends almost entirely on agriculture for its exports, and a single crop, coffee, normally accounts for over 60 per cent of published exports by value. Trade has continued to be directed largely towards the Western capitalist economies, 69.4 per cent of exports in 1983 going to, and 62.1 per cent of imports coming from, Western Europe, North America, and Japan.⁷ Ethiopia belongs to the Lomé Convention with the European Community and the currency is officially pegged to the US dollar. Although it has observer status with the CMEA, and has established bilateral economic commissions with the CMEA itself and with most of its individual member states, the level of trade is slight, with the sole but major exception of oil, which Ethiopia imports from the Soviet Union under a special arrangement although its details have not been made public. This accounts for by far the greater part of the 27.9 per cent of its imports which Ethiopia received from the socialist states in 1983; 6.8 per cent of exports in the same year went to the socialist states. On two occasions early in the revolution, in 1977/78 and again in 1979/80, Ethiopia exported coffee under barter arrangements to East Germany and the Soviet Union; but these produced familiar problems, both over the goods received in exchange, and over the resale of the produce on Western markets, and the experiment has not been repeated. The 1977/78 deal with East Germany, coming at a time of exceptionally high world market coffee prices, was especially disadvantageous.

4. Ethiopia, Office of the National Committee for Central Planning, *Ten years Perspective Plan 1984/85—1993/94* (Addis Ababa, August 1984), hereafter *Ten Year Plan*, p. 53.

5. See V. Vigand, 'Problems of Ethiopia's Socio-Economic Development: difficulties and Prospects', (Addis Ababa: Eighth International Conference on Ethiopian Studies, November 1984), p. 15; and F. Halliday and M. Molyneux, 'The Soviet Union and the Ethiopian Revolution', *Third World Affairs* 1986, pp. 180–192.

6. See ILO, Jobs and Skills Programme for Africa, *Socialism from the Grass Roots: accumulation, employment and equity in Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa, September 1982), hereafter *Socialism from the Grass Roots*, pp. 10–13.

7. National Bank of Ethiopia, *Quarterly Bulletin*, 10, 1, Addis Ababa (1984).

However, there is no evidence that socialist development strategy has been harmed by Ethiopia's incorporation into the global economy, and in some respects one might even argue that it has been helped by it. Despite Ethiopia's heavy export dependence on a single crop, coffee has proved a fortunate crop to export since the mid-1970s. The index value of Ethiopia's coffee exports, from a base level of 100 for 1962-64, had risen only to 156 by 1973-75, but shot up to 654 in 1977, falling back to an average of 433 for 1978-80, and 342 for 1981-83.⁸ Prices have risen again in the mid-1980s. As a result, Ethiopia's terms of trade have followed a fluctuating but generally favourable trend since the outbreak of the revolution and were especially favourable during the critical early years, when the problems of economic disruption were greatest. The dramatic increase already noted in Ethiopia's current account deficit has been due to a failure of export production, not to disadvantageous movements in world markets.

Nor, rather more surprisingly, has Ethiopia suffered from any reduction in official development aid as a result of its shift both to an avowedly socialist development strategy and to the Soviet Union away from the United States in international alignment. The one exception is the withdrawal of US development assistance (though not humanitarian aid for famine relief) in 1979 under the Hickenlooper amendment, which requires termination of aid to states which expropriate US private assets without compensation; since nationalized US assets in Ethiopia amounted only at their owners' valuation to \$30 million and an agreed settlement of claims could probably have been reached for about half of this sum (or substantially less than the aid that could have been released by paying it), it is clear enough that the ending of American aid resulted from a stand on principle by the Ethiopian government rather than from any 'punitive' reaction to the revolution from Washington.⁹ Even so, this US assistance was more than compensated for by receipts from other sources. According to Ethiopian government figures, the average annual inflow of foreign assistance increased from 76.7 million birr in 1970-74 to 247.3 million birr in 1975-81.¹⁰ Some of this increase came from the socialist states, but most of it came from the European Community and the World Bank.¹¹ The percentage of overseas development assistance from all sources going to Ethiopia improved from 0.7 in 1970/71 to 1.0 in 1982/83, while over the same period aid receipts increased from 2.4 to 5.9 per cent of Ethiopia's gross national product.¹² Ethiopia is not a favoured recipient of development aid, ranking only forty-

8. Ethiopia, Ministry of Coffee and Tea Development, *Coffee Statistics Handbook 1961/62 to 1982/83* (Addis Ababa, 1984), Tables E1 & E2.

9. See D. A. Korn, *Ethiopia, the United States and the Soviet Union* (London, Croom Helm, 1986), p. 51-53.

10. *Ten Year Plan*, p. 317.

11. Halliday and Molyneux, 'The Soviet Union & the Ethiopian Revolution', p. 187.

12. Cited with permission from P. Mosley, *Overseas Aid: its defence and reform* (Brighton: Harvester, 1987).

fifth among less developed countries in aid as a percentage of GNP, but the position has improved since the revolution. There has, however, been no new foreign private investment, despite a proclamation to encourage it. In the absence of attractive mineral resources, multinationals have stayed away, and even mineral prospecting has been carried out only by socialist states, including North Korea.

When the figures for development aid are combined with the very high level of military assistance which Ethiopia has received from the socialist states since 1977 and the increase in humanitarian aid for famine relief, largely from the West, it becomes clear that the Ethiopian government has been able to manage the international environment, on the whole, very much to its own advantage. While in many other cases, as in Mozambique or Nicaragua, fledgling revolutionary regimes have had to struggle against the hostility of conservative powers, this scarcely applies to Ethiopia. The major challenges that the regime has faced, from the Somalis in 1977/78 and the separatist movements in Eritrea and Tigray, have come paradoxically from other groups which themselves have claimed to be socialist.

Urban and industrial policy

Between the outbreak of the revolution and 1980, urban living standards declined by over half for highly paid workers and nearly a third for low paid workers;¹³ and with a further sharp rise in food prices since then, this decline has certainly continued. Salary scales have remained unchanged since the early 1970s, despite inflation; and although civilian government employment increased from 109,322 to 167,860 between 1977/78 and 1982/83,¹⁴ at an average annual rate of some 9.5 per cent (while military manpower rose from about 45,000 to 300,000), unemployment among school leavers has become a major problem. This is not reflected, as it would be in many parts of Africa, in any noticeable increase in crime; Addis Ababa remains generally safe and well-policed, and the increase in control capacity produced by the *kebele* system helps to maintain public security. Unemployment, which is much higher for women than for men, may however contribute to prostitution, and a government survey in 1982 identified 37,115 full-time prostitutes, about half of them in Addis Ababa.¹⁵ Another major problem area is housing, the destruction of the landlord class in 1975 having contributed to a decline both in the relative quantity, and in the already abysmal quality, of the housing stock. The government institutions responsible for urban housing (the *kebele* for cheaper houses, a special agency for more

13. *Socialism from the Grass Roots*, p. 238.

14. Ephrem Asebe and Ashenafi Belayneh, 'Analysis of Employment and Wage Structure of Employees Administered under Central Personnel Administration', (unpublished paper, Addis Ababa, May 1984).

15. *Socialism from the Grass Roots*, pp. 327-8.

expensive ones) have come nowhere near building the number of houses needed to sustain the natural increase in population, let alone improve the existing stock, and the search for accommodation is a major problem for every new resident from young married couples to senior international civil servants.

A decline in living standards has, of course, marked a great many African cities since the early 1970s and cannot simply be ascribed to the effects of revolution in Ethiopia. At most, one can only conclude that this decline has not been reversed by that revolutionary mobilization of previously unproductive resources which is often taken to be one of the main assets of a socialist development strategy. Certainly the population has been organized as never before, through the *kebelles* and the women's and youth associations, and efforts have been made to mitigate urban poverty through a reasonably effective system of food rationing in the major towns, which provides a striking tribute to the effectiveness of revolutionary organization, even though it rests on the underpayment of rural food producers. But the hierarchial organizations characteristic of the new regime are much better suited to distribution and control than they are to the encouragement of production.

The government's industrial policy has been badly affected by the classic problem of socialist gigantism: the tendency, inherent in planning from the top down through large state corporations, to put a high proportion of investment into a small number of large projects. Just over half of the total industrial investment envisaged in the Plan over a ten year period is committed to thirteen factories.¹⁶ The same problems apply to the projects already implemented, including notably the textile mill built in Kombolcha near Dessie in Wollo, and the Mugher cement factory. The textile mill, at a cost of 180 million birr (two-thirds of which has been provided by the Ethiopian government, the rest mostly by Czech and East German aid), employs 3460 people, an investment of over 50,000 birr for each job.¹⁷ No comparable figures are available for the cement factory, but the capital/employment ratio appears to be even higher. Other investments in large oilseed mills at Mojo and Bahr Dar threaten to destroy one of the main sources of small scale industrial employment. While investment strategies of this kind are by no means restricted to socialist states, they tend to be especially characteristic of them. Another area of major industrial investment since the revolution has been in alcoholic beverages, with new breweries and a distillery in Addis Ababa and Harer and a malting plant at Asela. I recall with some shock being informed by a state farm manager in Arsi, at the height of the famine in November 1984, that his bumper crop of barley was all destined for making beer.

16. *Ten Year Plan*, p. 104.

17. *Socialism from the Grass Roots*, pp. 148-9.

Agriculture

The whole area of Ethiopian agricultural policy is so vast and so vital that it can only be very sketchily covered in a survey such as this. The central point, however, is that by far the greater part of Ethiopian agriculture, amounting to over 98 per cent at the time of the revolution, consists in family smallholder (or peasant) production. Landlords did not, with small exceptions, run their own commercial farms, but simply taxed smallholder production, even for export crops such as coffee. It is, therefore, what happens to the smallholder sector that really matters.

State farms, which in 1985 accounted for some three per cent of the total cultivated acreage (a slight decline from the peak in the early 1980s), are important in helping to generate a surplus for urban consumption and they also absorb a very high proportion of agricultural investment, but they are otherwise insignificant compared with the peasant sector. In crude production terms, they have not (unlike some African state farms) been a total disaster, but, with a very high level of capital input, including tractors, fertilizers, and improved seeds, they have still managed to produce only about the same amount of grain per hectare as peasants with no modern inputs at all.¹⁸

The basic problems of the peasant sector—small plots, overcultivation, and an almost total lack of modern inputs—have been exacerbated by land reform itself and add up to a process of what Dessalegn has aptly called ‘agrarian involution’: a tendency to withdraw from the market and to retreat into subsistence production, which itself becomes less and less adequate.¹⁹ What the land reform actually did was to guarantee all peasant households a roughly equal share of the land available within their own peasant association area, which normally covered no more than a few hundred hectares or a few hundred families. They could not farm land outside this area and they could farm inside it only so long as they remained resident within it. At the same time, the hire of agricultural labour was prohibited, except on state farms—where it is sometimes involuntary and always very poorly paid.

The effect was curiously conservative. Peasants were confined to their own home localities and movement was inhibited, either to the towns or to other rural areas. The rate of rural-urban migration dropped sharply at the revolution and even Addis Ababa has since grown at little more than the natural rate of increase of some 3.0 per cent a year. Equally important, the process by which over at least a century landless peasants have moved southwards from the overpopulated areas of Tigray and Wollo was brought to a halt. There were no landless peasants any longer, but the *amount* of land which each household farmed was steadily reduced, with its inevitable

18. This conclusion, reached by a number of studies, is confirmed by Mengistu Haile-Mariam, *Central Report, Second COPWE Congress* (Addis Ababa, January 1983), pp. 41–2.

19. Dessalegn Rahmato, *Agrarian Reform in Ethiopia* (Uppsala, Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1984), pp. 61–2.

culmination in land degradation and ultimately famine. Several studies show a steady decline in the average size of plots. Though impressive large-scale programmes of terracing and afforestation were launched, peasants had no incentive to invest in the capital value of their land, since they enjoyed only a short-term use of it and were liable to be deprived of any particular plot as the result of reallocations which take place every two or three years.

In the normal grain surplus producing areas, the equivalent result was to reduce the amount available for urban consumption. Initially, this result followed simply from the destruction of the old mechanisms for surplus extraction, but, even after the establishment of the Agricultural Marketing Corporation in 1976 and the imposition of grain quotas on peasants' associations from 1978/79 onwards, the pricing system was a heavy disincentive. Official prices failed to keep pace either with market prices or with the cost of inputs such as fertilizer. A recent study of an area of commercialized peasant farming in Gojjam shows fertilizer use to have dropped by 44 per cent between 1975/76 and 1982/83, due both to price movements and to restrictions on credit to individual farmers.²⁰ Already by 1981/82, a study in Arsi showed AMC purchase prices as lower than local market prices by 53 per cent for maize, 52 per cent for teff (the favoured Ethiopian grain), 29 per cent for wheat, and 19 per cent for barley.²¹ With the progressively more serious food shortages of the following three years, the discrepancies have increased, while the decay of the domestic marketing system as a result of famine, transport shortages and government pricing policies is indicated by large and growing differences between food prices even in adjacent regions.²²

The effects on the export sector were similar. One of the main ways in which the government financed the rapid increase in state employment which followed the revolution was by extracting a greatly increased share of the export value of coffee. The share of export value paid to producers fell from about 67 per cent before the revolution to 33 per cent afterwards,²³ and since this was likewise heavily disincentive, production fell or, at best, kept level, so that export quotas could only be achieved by a draconian squeeze on domestic consumption. The clearest indication of the effect of this squeeze is provided by the pricing structure. In January 1986, coffee could be bought (illegally) in the producing areas at between two and three birr a kilo; the f.o.b. export price fell between seven and eight birr; and the Addis Ababa

20. Mengistu Woube, *Problems of Land Reform Implementation in Rural Ethiopia* (Uppsala, Uppsala University, 1986), pp. 104–5.

21. Alemayehu Lireno, 'Grain Marketing in Post-1974 Ethiopia: problems and prospects', (Addis Ababa, Eighth International Conference on Ethiopian Studies, November 1984).

22. See A. Saith, 'The Distributional Dimensions of Revolutionary Transition: Ethiopia', *Journal of Development Studies*, 22 (1985), pp. 153–5.

23. Teshome Mulat, 'The Share of Coffee Producers in the Value of Coffee Exports', *Ethiopian Journal of Development Research*, 3 (1979), pp. 51–68.

black market price was fifteen birr. It is a tribute to the efficiency of the Ethiopian state that price discrepancies of this level could be maintained and did not collapse from the effects of smuggling and bribery. But, equally, the socialist distribution system could be maintained only by a high level of physical control, the most evident indication of which was the appearance (or reappearance, since they were likewise a feature of Ethiopia before 1935) of internal customs posts on the main roads. One public bus on which I travelled from a coffee producing area to Addis Ababa in early 1986, for example, was stopped and searched on six occasions.

The effects of land reform and pricing policies in forcing peasants out of the market are such that the government does have a real problem on its hands; and many of its most controversial policies arise from the need to use government action to achieve ends which were previously achieved through the market, or by the simple pressure of population on resources. The resettlement of famine victims in the south and west is a response to the population pressure exacerbated by land reform, just as villagization derives from the need to extract a larger food surplus for the towns. Many of the potential solutions to these problems, moreover, present themselves in terms which, to the Ethiopian government, offer a choice between a capitalist policy on the one hand, and a socialist one on the other. The capitalist solutions would call for government purchase prices for grain and coffee to rise towards the open market price, and might well call also for security of tenure in land and an easing of restrictions on the private hire of labour, with potentially serious repercussions both for government revenues and for urban food prices, as well as for rural class formation. These are measures which even the Soviet advisers attached to the ONCCP have been prepared to consider. In a memo to the government in September 1985, they recommended 'creating a financial mechanism inducing the peasantry to increase production and enhance its marketability on the basis of adopting a flexible policy of state prices for farm produce'. Still more daringly, they suggested 'giving due consideration to the possibility of establishing, in some zones of the country, private commercial farms specialized in growing exportable produce'.²⁴ By mid-1986, there were some indications that the first of these proposals was at least receiving serious consideration.

The socialist solution was collectivization through what are known in Ethiopia as agricultural producers' cooperatives. These are modelled as closely as local circumstances permit on eastern European lines, with three forms of cooperative corresponding to increasing levels of collectivization. The government has consistently pressed peasants to form cooperatives since September 1978 and has provided incentives to do so, ranging from a reduction in tax levels to greatly enhanced provision of credit, though

24. V. V. Sokolov *et al.*, 'Considerations on the Economic Policy of Ethiopia for the Next Few Years', (unpublished memorandum, Addis Ababa, September 1985).

against these must be set the problem that it is much harder for cooperatives than for individual producers to evade the attentions of the Agricultural Marketing Corporation. Both quantitatively and qualitatively, this campaign has proved a failure. Quantitatively, only about 4.5 per cent of arable land was under cooperatives by June 1984, and, while this certainly indicates that the campaign was indeed very largely voluntary, it also shows the impossibility of achieving collectivization by such means. As one peasant was reported to me as putting it, 'I is better than we'. Qualitatively, all the available studies show that the cooperatives produce appreciably less per hectare than either individual peasants or state farms, despite receiving by far the greater part of the investment opportunities available to peasant agriculture.²⁵ Though some studies have called for cooperativization as a means of increasing rural capital formation,²⁶ there is nothing in the experience as it has operated so far to suggest that this would result.

The Plan, however, provides for a dramatic increase in land under cooperatives, from 1.3 per cent of the total cultivated area in 1983/84 to 48.5 per cent ten years later;²⁷ land under state farms was due to increase much more modestly, from 3.2 to 6.2 per cent, leaving a drop from 95.5 to 45.3 in the percentage under peasant smallholders. The Plan is likely to be at its most effective when it provides for clear targets, such as this, which can be achieved through administrative action; and the villagization campaign which got under way from April–May 1985 onwards is probably best seen in this light. This involved the concentration of previously scattered homesteads into centralized villages, in a way which certainly aids state control of peasant production and is generally regarded as a prelude to cooperativization, even though peasants continued for the moment to farm their individual plots. This programme started in Hararge in early 1985 and spread to most of southern Ethiopia following the end of the rains in October 1985; in his Revolution Day speech of September 1986, Mengistu Haile-Mariam announced that just over four and a half million people had so far been villagized,²⁸ and, if the campaign continues unaltered, it may be expected to result in the eventual villagization of something over twenty million people. Though comparisons are readily made with the Tanzanian villagization programme, it should be noted that Ethiopian peasant populations are generally much more densely settled than in Tanzania, so that villagization does not in most areas entail any change in the lands actually cultivated. Its consequences are most likely to be felt in the initial disrup-

25. See *Socialism from the Grass Roots*, p. 44; and B. Mulgetta and C. White, *Major Issues in Agrarian Transformation* (Rome, FAO, 1984).

26. See K. Griffin and R. Hay, 'Problems of Agricultural Development in Socialist Ethiopia: an overview and a suggested strategy', *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 13 (1985), pp. 37–66.

27. *Ten Year Plan*, p. 64.

28. Mengistu Haile-Mariam, Revolution Day address, in *The Ethiopian Herald*, Addis Ababa, 13 September 1986.

tion of farming involved in building the villages themselves, in the greater distance from house to fields, and in its incalculable effects on farmers' attitudes and morale. Should it culminate, as seems likely, in large scale cooperativization, the new cooperatives will presumably match those that already fail to meet peasant levels of production, save that any benefits to be gained from voluntariness will be lost, while the comparatively generous credit and other facilities which can be made available to a small number of cooperatives will have to be much more thinly spread among a large number.

Conclusion

There can be no doubt at all that, since the revolution, living standards in both city and countryside have declined dramatically. Some of this decline must be ascribed to problems common both to Ethiopia and to third world states as a whole, which no government could have escaped; part, however, must equally be ascribed to the effects of revolution itself. Even without taking into account the effects of civil war (which has not directly affected most of the economically important parts of Ethiopia, save that military requirements have called for the extraction of both human and financial resources from the productive economy), the revolutionary regime's pursuit of a classic Marxist strategy of development, sincerely and fairly efficiently (if at the same time somewhat rigidly) implemented, can only have exacerbated the already chronic problems which the Ethiopian economy has faced. Nor can any future breakthrough plausibly be expected, without substantial changes in government policy, both in industry and especially in agriculture.

Single case studies are of course fraught with problems of overgeneralization. Ethiopia's difficulties differ in many respects from those of, say, Angola and Mozambique; they are in some ways greater, in others less. But when the Ethiopian case is added to the sombre record of Africa's other socialist states, it may not be too soon to ask what socialism *means* in the context of states which are poor, dependent, and riven by domestic as well as international conflict; and of whether there is *any* development strategy which may reasonably be categorized as 'socialist' and which at the same time offers at least a plausible prospect of improving, over the long term, the lives of the people affected by it.

JAPAN'S SOUTH AFRICA POLICY: POLITICAL RHETORIC AND ECONOMIC REALITIES

RICHARD J. PAYNE

DESPITE the fact that Japan is South Africa's second largest trading partner and its biggest customer for strategic raw materials, particularly chromium and platinum, anti-apartheid activity in Japan is essentially nonexistent and there is little international condemnation of Japan's policies towards the white minority regime. Japan's policy of *Seikei Bunri*, separating politics from business, and its reluctance to include human rights considerations in its trade policies are accepted by the Japanese public. The public also appears to agree with the government's conservative economic policy which emphasizes efficiency to the exclusion of concern about equity. Furthermore, this approach is supported by the ruling conservative Liberal Democratic Party, the national bureaucracy, big business and financial institutions, a coalition which has traditionally dominated that country's foreign economic policy-making process.¹ Official policy statements, which are ambiguous and do not reflect the reality of Japan's relationship with South Africa, escape close domestic and international scrutiny. This article examines the incongruity between Japan's political rhetoric condemning apartheid and its strong economic ties with the white minority regime.

Japan's argument that, as long as other industrial countries engage in business and trade with South Africa, it will have to do likewise is no longer credible. However, it is unlikely that Japan will rush in to fill a vacuum resulting from European and American withdrawal. In addition to South Africa's deteriorating economic environment, Japan has to consider the global implications of close ties with the apartheid regime. Developments in South Africa have contributed to the merging of pragmatism and morality. Opposing apartheid now makes business sense and, given Japan's heavy dependence on trade for its survival, it can hardly risk receiving negative international attention. To safeguard its long term interests, Japan is establishing trade links with, and investing in, many black African states, as well as taking a strong political stand against apartheid, even as its trade with South Africa grows.

Japan's trade with South Africa

The dominance of trade in Japan's relationship with South Africa was evident from the beginning of the 20th century. Both Egypt and South

1. T. J. Pempel, 'Japanese Foreign Economic Policy: the domestic bases for international behavior', *International Organization*, 31 (1977), pp. 754-55.

Africa were viewed by Japan as gateways to Europe as well as potential trading partners. Although commercial links were established with Kenya and other countries along Africa's east coast, Japan clearly focused on South Africa, especially during World War I when Germany lost its position as South Africa's second largest trading partner after Great Britain. Japan's exports to South Africa, valued at 454,000 yen in 1912, increased to 18,343,000 yen in 1918, while its imports, which were practically non-existent in 1912, jumped to 29,449,000 yen by 1918. In 1920 South Africa's exports to Japan declined to 8,206,000 yen and imports climbed to 73,895,000 yen.² As Britain, France, and Germany resumed their economic activities at the end of the war, trade between South Africa and Japan declined, with the trade imbalance in Japan's favour.³

This trade surplus triggered strong anti-Japanese feelings among white South Africans, especially the Afrikaners who were determined to rid the country of all Asians, including Japanese. The Immigration Act of 1913 was utilized to exclude Asian immigrants as well as to prevent Japanese from expanding trade and commerce. Japan's efforts to obtain preferential treatment for its citizens, however, were aided by South Africa's economic difficulties, particularly in the wool industry. The Great Depression closed many overseas wool markets at a time when South Africa was over-producing wool and facing serious competition from Australia. Japan, a major consumer of wool, mostly from Australia, decided to import South African wool in exchange for equal treatment for Japanese in South Africa. The prohibition against Japanese immigrants was removed and all Japanese citizens in South Africa were given the same treatment as whites.⁴

Economic considerations forced the Afrikaners to modify further discriminatory policies against the Japanese following the flight of foreign capital in response to the Sharpeville Massacre in 1961. South Africa's isolation pushed it to make new friends among pariah states in Latin America and elsewhere and to encourage more Japanese investments. Between 1962 and 1968, the value of Japanese-South African trade rose from about \$178,974,000 to \$551,591,000, and by 1980 the figure stood at \$3,593,738,000, twenty times what it was in 1960. South Africa's extensive economic ties with Japan influenced it to grant Japanese the status of 'honorary whites' in the Republic in 1961,⁵ a designation which permitted

2. Jun Morikawa, 'The Myth and Reality of Japan's Relations with Colonial Africa', *Journal of African Studies*, 12 (1985), p. 42. Japan's economic interests led to diplomatic relations with South Africa. Its first consulate in Africa was established at Cape Town on 14 August 1918.

3. In 1926 Japan's imports from South Africa were valued at 917,000 yen while exports amounted to 10,741,000 yen.

4. Morikawa, 'The Myth and Reality', p. 43.

5. Joanna Moss and John Ravenhill, *Emerging Japanese Economic Influence in Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), p. 62; and Jun Morikawa, 'The Anatomy of Japan's South Africa Policy', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 22 (1984), p. 134. Japanese imports from and exports to South Africa are equal in monetary value.

them access to all white areas, housing and cultural activities, and allowed them to engage freely in business.

There are several reasons for Japan's decision to develop strong economic links with South Africa. First, Japan's growing economy depends on imports of essential minerals such as platinum, chromium, manganese, cobalt, and vanadium which are abundant in South Africa and not readily available elsewhere. Chromium is used to produce stainless steel and electrolytic chromium metal for ships, industrial equipment, and naval propulsion systems; manganese is used to make steel, pig iron, and dry cell batteries; and cobalt is essential for the manufacture of superalloys for industrial and aircraft gas turbine engines, magnetic materials for various electric applications, catalysts, and for metal cutting and mining tool bits. Second, South Africa represents an expanding market for Japanese products. Third, South Africa's reputation for being a reliable trading partner is well-established. That country's export bodies maintain tight quality control and honour contracts. As Martin Spring has observed, reliability of supply is extremely important for resource-poor Japan where space and financial considerations militate against massive stockpiles of materials at factories.⁶ Although trade between the two countries is extensive, continued access to mineral resources predominates. So crucial are these resources to Japan's global exports (computers, precision instruments, cars, steel, etc.) that the Japanese commit themselves to long term contracts to buy coal, chromium, platinum, uranium, manganese, and iron ore from South Africa while making token gestures to placate critics of apartheid.

The arrangement to obtain uranium following the oil crisis is a good example of Japan's policy. During the 1973 crisis Japan's almost total dependence on foreign petroleum supplies forced it to increase its uranium imports dramatically. Its power companies signed contracts as early as December 1973 to cover an estimated 80 per cent of import needs for a ten-year period. Kansai Electric Power Company and Mitsubishi Corporation of Japan, the Rossing mining group of South Africa, as well as the Japanese and South African governments, were parties to the agreement that provided for selling Japan 8,200 short tons of uranium from the Rossing mine in Namibia. Mitsubishi, in cooperation with the Japanese government, exchanged nuclear technology for a guaranteed supply of uranium, despite UN resolutions prohibiting trade with Namibia.⁷

Similarly, Japan imported high-grade Rhodesian chrome through South Africa although it claimed to support the UN embargo against Rhodesia. Discrepancies between Japanese figures, which showed that it imported

6. Martin Spring, 'Japan: African ties under fire', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 26 September 1975, pp. 37-38.

7. Moss and Ravenhill, *Emerging Japanese Economic Influence*, p. 64.

719,469 metric tons of chromium in 1971 and 445,263 metric tons in 1972, and South African statistics, showing that only 353,375 tons and 253,083 tons respectively were exported to Japan during those two years, ignited African criticism of Japan's role in strengthening minority rule in Rhodesia.⁸ Japan responded to pressure from African states by placing restrictions on South African high-grade chrome in 1974. Its dependence on chromium for manufacturing various kinds of steel and for transportation and power generating industries influenced it to ignore international sanctions.

In addition to minerals, Japan's imports from South Africa include citrus fruit, wool, and eggs. Japan, with Canada, has also been a major market for South African sugar; indeed, the Japanese market is so important that South Africans have geared sugar processing to the requirements of Japan's mills, standards other customers must accept.⁹

Japanese exports to South Africa include motor vehicles, car parts, electrical and mechanical equipment, steel, textiles, chinaware, toys, sewing machines, television sets, cameras, watches, radios, tape recorders, electrical appliances, and computers. Japan continues to sell computers directly to South Africa as well as through European dealers and under the names of European computer firms such as Siemens and BASF, which trade directly. Direct sales alone amounted to \$40 million in 1985.¹⁰ It also supplies South Africa with advanced technology through licenses from Japanese corporations and direct sales which are often facilitated by government-subsidised trade credits from Japan's Export-Import Bank.¹¹ Japanese firms, for example, provided much of the technology for South Africa's oil-from-coal project, as well as offshore drilling rigs to reduce that country's vulnerability stemming from its lack of domestic oil production. As Tables I and II indicate, trade between the two countries remains strong.

Even as Japan's External Trade Organization is actually promoting trade with South Africa, the government is encouraging Japanese companies to invest in black Africa and expand trade partly in an attempt to lessen opposition to its ties with Pretoria as well as to reduce its dependence on South Africa.

Japan's economic ties with black Africa

Japanese investments in black Africa are concentrated in shipping-related activities in Liberia, a country selected by major shipping states because of

8. Susumu Awanohara, 'Trade Priorities Still Dominant', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 26 September 1975, p. 36. The Byrd Amendment allowed the United States to continue importing Rhodesian chrome.

9. Spring, 'Japan', p. 37.

10. Susan Moffat, 'Never Mind Apartheid While Business Pays', *Daily Yomiuri*, 15 September 1985; and Robert Whyman, 'Japan to Impose Sanctions on S.A.', *The Guardian*, 10 October 1985.

11. John Ravenhill, 'Japan and Africa', in Colin Legum (ed.), *Africa Contemporary Record*, 1981/82 (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1981), p. A211.

TABLE I
Japan's Trade with South Africa
 (In current US \$m)

	Imports	Exports
1976	938.50	883.35
1977	1014.77	853.37
1978	921.50	868.29
1981	1556.20	1991.06
1982	1860.28	1667.27
1983	1584.00	1736.50
1984	1603.40	1825.36

Sources: *Africa Contemporary Record, 1979-1980*: Customs Bureau, Ministry of Finance, Tokyo; Japan Tariff Association; *Africa*, No. 147, (November 1983).

TABLE II
Main Items of Trade in 1985
 (In current US \$m)

Japan's Exports to South Africa		Japan's Imports from South Africa	
Cars:	369	Coal:	378
Car Parts:	206	Metallic-minerals:	289
VTR tape:	91	Platinum:	246
Radio, T.V.:	51	Ferrous alloy:	160
Generator, motor:	44	Gold:	52

Source: The Japanese Embassy (Washington, D.C.).

its flags of convenience policy. Liberia received over 80 per cent of all Japanese investments in Africa in 1981 and 62 per cent in 1983.¹² Since 1973, however, greater emphasis has been placed on finding critical mineral resources, especially uranium, iron ore, chromium and oil. One of the most active firms involved in uranium exploration and mining is the Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corporation which has operations in Mali, Niger, Guinea, Gabon, and Zambia. Niger, regarded as the most promising source of uranium, is already a producer. Overseas Uranium Resources Development Company, a Japanese consortium, the Niger government, Cogema of France and Spain's Enusa are mining uranium at Akouta and Tokyo Uranium is searching for deposits in Mauritania.¹³ The Japanese government's Metal Mining Agency is supporting chromium exploration efforts in Sudan's Ingesana Hills and Japanese firms are exploiting iron ore deposits in Liberia, Senegal, and Mauritania, and manganese in Gabon. Mitsubishi Petroleum Development Company and

12. *Japanese Overseas Investment* (London: The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1983) p. 64.

13. Martin Roth, 'Japan and Africa', *Africa Economist Digest*, 10 December 1982, p. 10.

C. Itoh are working with Elf-Gabon of France to increase oil production levels.¹⁴

Manufacturing investments are mainly in motor vehicles, textiles, consumer electronics, fishing nets, batteries, and motor bikes. In 1984 Africa took one-fifth of all Japanese knockdown vehicles for assembly in local plants. In Nigeria, the main country involved, Mitsubishi assembles two ton trucks and Honda puts together motor bikes.¹⁵ Overall, Japanese investments remain relatively modest, especially when compared with Japanese exports to Africa.

Faced with African criticism of its trade with South Africa and rising protectionist policies in Western markets, Japan views Africa as a potentially significant market, especially for automobiles. Its vehicle exports to Africa have increased to such a large extent that over 60 per cent of all cars sold in Africa are Japanese, and Nigeria alone surpassed South Africa as Japan's largest customer on the continent in 1981.¹⁶ In addition to automobiles, Japan's exports to Africa include tape recorders, television sets, radios, and video tape recorders. As Table III indicates, Japan enjoys a favorable trade surplus with black Africa.

TABLE III
*Japan's Trade with Africa (Excluding
South Africa)*
(in current US \$m)

	Imports	Exports
1976	1649.6	6447.88
1977	1403.7	6659.50
1978	1029.17	4789.57
1980	2672.68	5944.24
1981	3022.80	7595.32
1982	1914.54	5312.81
1983	1683.51	4264.47
1984	1491.85	4504.12

Sources: *Africa Contemporary Record, 1979-1980*; Customs Bureau, Ministry of Finance, Tokyo; Japan Tariff Association; *Africa*, No. 147, (November 1983).

In addition to trade and investments, Japan is also providing foreign aid. However, this assistance remains below that of most industrialized countries, despite Japan's record \$60 billion trade surplus in 1985. Prior to 1985, Japan's official development assistance was only 0.23 per cent of its

14. Roth, 'Japan and Africa', p. 9. These companies produced about 4,000 barrels of oil per day in 1982.

15. 'Japanese Commitment to Africa', *Africa*, No. 171 (November 1985), p. 64.

16. Ravenhill, 'Japan and Africa', p. A212; and LuMiaoeng, 'Tokyo Draws Closer to Africa', *Beijing Review*, No. 22 (3 June 1985), p. 12.

Gross National Product, compared with an average of 0.35 per cent of OECD countries.¹⁷ Furthermore, aid is heavily concentrated on about seven countries with which Japan has strong economic ties, especially suppliers of essential raw materials. Reacting to criticism of its policies, the Japanese government donated \$20 million in 1981 and \$165 million in 1984 to famine victims. In 1985 Prime Minister Nakasone promised to double Japan's development assistance over a seven year period starting in 1986.¹⁸

Diplomatic relations with black Africa are also instrumental in strengthening ties. Several African governments, despite serious economic difficulties and reductions in diplomatic staffs around the world, have reinforced their representation in Japan, and many leaders, including Presidents Moi, Mugabe, Nyerere, and Kaunda, visited Japan. In November 1984, Japan's Foreign Minister Shintaro Abe, the Japanese crown prince, and some members of parliament toured ten African states, and reiterated their government's official policy on apartheid.¹⁹

Official sanctions and economic realities

Japan was the first major industrialized country to prohibit its citizens from directly investing in South Africa and as early as 1974 the London-based Japan International Bank Ltd announced that it would immediately halt loans to the South African government as well as to private individuals.²⁰ However, restrictions against investments are extremely porous and serve to obfuscate the economic realities. Some companies circumvent the ban by investing through their overseas subsidiaries. The most common practice by far, permitted by the Japanese government, is for firms to build factories in South Africa using local capital. Japanese companies transfer patents, technology, management and engineering skills to their locally franchised partners without making any direct investments. The automobile industry especially has benefited from this practice.

Toyota established its first assembly plant in South Africa in 1962. Other Japanese car manufacturers following Toyota included Nissan, Mitsubishi, Isuzu, and Mazda. Toyota SA is the company's largest plant outside Japan and the major producer of motor vehicles in South Africa. Altogether, Japanese model cars assembled in South Africa under licensing agreements have accounted for at least 35 per cent of that country's car sales since 1981.²¹ In theory Toyota's operations in South Africa are not

17. Ravenhill, 'Japan and Africa', p. A214.

18. 'Japanese Commitment to Africa', p. 63.

19. Toru Kotani, 'Rising Sun Over Africa', *Africa Report* (November–December 1985), p. 68.

20. F. R. Metrowich, *South Africa's New Frontiers* (Sandton, South Africa: Valiant Publishers, 1977), p. 142. Investments for establishing commercial offices where permitted.

21. Moss and Ravenhill, *Emerging Japanese Economic Influence*, p. 62; Stuart Leavenworth, 'Japan's Complicity with Apartheid', *Japananalysis*, 2 (1985), p. 14; and UN Centre on Transnational Corporations, *Policies and Practices of Transnational Corporations Regarding their Activities in South Africa and Namibia* (New York: United Nations, 1984), p. 9.

directly controlled by the home company and Japan does not have the equivalent of the Sullivan Principles or the EEC Code for black employees, many of whom are employed in low-level jobs and receive substandard wages at Toyota. The same applies to other 'Japanese' companies such as Bridgestone, Yokohama, Toyo Rubber (tire companies), Hitachi, Sanyo, Sony, Sharp, Pioneer, Sansui, Fuji, Akai Canon and Matsushita (manufacturers of electronic and electrical appliances), and Honda, Yamaha, and Suzuki (motor cycle firms).

Some Japanese firms technically comply with the ban against investing in South Africa by locating their operations in nominally independent homelands, a practice Japan has not prevented.²² Indeed, by extending official trade credits to South Africa through its Export-Import Bank and by purchasing raw materials on long-term contracts, the Japanese government indirectly invests in the Republic. Such purchases provided the financial foundation for investments in the ports of Saldanha and Richards Bay, developed primarily to supply Japan with iron ore and coking coal respectively.²³

Another factor undermining the policy against direct investments is the absence of legal restrictions against Japanese foreign exchange banks and securities companies financing South African residents. Japanese officials, while regarding such loans as legal, have called the practice undesirable and urge banks to make cautious considerations.²⁴ Similarly, the Japanese government has only requested 'all those concerned to cooperate in the voluntary halting of imports of Krugerrands and all other South African gold coins',²⁵ thus allowing the yearly \$50 million dollar trade to continue. Most anti-apartheid activists regard the purchase of Krugerrands as direct support of apartheid, a view endorsed by the United States.

Japan also points to the fact that diplomatic relations with South Africa have been downgraded to the consular level as evidence to support its claim that it has taken more severe measures against Pretoria than those taken by other countries. In reality, diplomatic relations do exist, and in terms of personnel and activities, the two consular offices in South Africa are much more important and influential than Japanese embassies in Nigeria and Kenya, two major markets for Japanese products.²⁶

Conducting relations at a lower level seems calculated to reduce black African antagonism, discourage close international scrutiny, and protect

22. Edward A. Olsen, 'Building Bridges to Africa', *Africa Report* (March–April 1980), p. 55. Japan's companies with offices in South Africa are urged to follow equal and fair employment practices.

23. Ravenhill, 'Japan and Africa', p. A211; and Olsen 'Building Bridges to Africa', p. 55.

24. Colin Legum (ed.), *Africa Contemporary Record, 1984/85*, (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1984), p. B804; and the Japanese Embassy (Washington D.C. 1985).

25. 'Statement by Foreign Minister Shintaro Abe on the Apartheid Policy of the Republic of South Africa', 9 October 1985.

26. Morikawa, 'The Myth and Reality', p. 133.

Japan's interests in Africa and elsewhere. After agreeing in 1961 to establish diplomatic relations, Tokyo decided in 1964 to maintain consular representation following growing international opposition to Pretoria's inhumane treatment of the black majority. Similarly, Japan's decision to suspend sports, cultural, and educational exchanges with South Africa was taken shortly after the oil crisis of 1973–74. This crisis underscored Japan's vulnerability due to its heavy dependence on imported raw materials, and influenced it to reexamine its policy of benign neglect toward Africa on the one hand and excessive entanglement with South Africa's white minority regime on the other. In an apparent effort to demonstrate its commitment to black Africa, Japan sent its Foreign Minister Kimura in 1974 on a ten-day tour of Ghana, Zaire, Nigeria, Egypt, and Tanzania.

Following South Africa's 1985 declaration of a state of emergency and the violence which accompanied it, Japan took measures to curtail the export of computers to apartheid-enforcing agencies such as the Ministry of Defence, the defence force, the Ministry of Law and Order, the police, the Armaments Development and Production Corporation, the National Institute for Defence Research, and the Ministry of Justice.²⁷ It also reiterated its long-standing ban on arms exports and imports from South Africa and reaffirmed its restrictions on cultural, sporting and educational exchanges with South Africa, and in September 1986 steel and iron imports were banned. Although Japan has refused to issue visas to South Africans representing the minority regime since 1974, it does not prevent its citizens from travelling to South Africa to attend conferences or participate in sporting events.²⁸

At the United Nations in 1986 Japan was obviously more vocal in its opposition to apartheid than it was earlier when it abstained on controversial issues, knowing that the United States or Britain would probably veto any serious actions against Pretoria. In December 1985 Japan called for courageous steps toward the abolition of apartheid, the release of Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners, and urged Pretoria to negotiate with representative black leaders, including those of the African National Congress. Japan called institutionalized racial discrimination in South Africa the most serious and systematic denial of freedom and equality anywhere in the world.²⁹ Japanese delegates usually stress their country's advocacy of racial equality, as the country's representatives have done since 1919 when Japan was virtually alone in the struggle against discrimination. While this is true, Japan was primarily concerned about the treatment of its citizens abroad, not black South Africans. Japan itself was a colonial power

27. *The Apartheid Enforcing Agencies Designated by the Government of Japan* (24 October 1985), pp. 1–2.

28. Morikawa, 'The Myth and Reality', p. 135. As early as 1985 Japan barred South African delegates from attending international Medical and Nutrition conferences.

29. Statement by Mrs Kurokuchi, UN General Assembly, 38th Session, Third Committee 6th meeting, 10 October 1983, p. 16; and statement by the Director-General for Public Information and Cultural Affairs, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, 26 December 1985.

that discriminated against inhabitants of its colonies (Korea, Taiwan, and parts of the South Pacific).

Unlike the United States or Britain, Japan does not have to pay attention to public opinion on the issue of minority rule in South Africa because the vast majority of Japanese citizens are indifferent to, and uninformed about, apartheid. Consequently, it does not have to clarify its policies toward South Africa or implement stronger sanctions to meet the demands of interest groups. Most Japanese share the myth that racial discrimination is nonexistent in Japan, despite obvious problems with Koreans and the Ainu, Japan's aboriginals. Afraid to acknowledge their own racial problems, few Japanese are interested in racial discrimination elsewhere. Labour unions, one of the groups most likely to oppose apartheid, are virtually nonpolitical and not very concerned about South Africa. Apart from issues relating to working conditions and pay, Japanese unions do not generally criticize management's policies nor do they combine their resources to influence government policies.

The Japan Anti-Apartheid Committee (JAAC), formed in 1964, is the only significant group that attempts to mobilize public opinion and openly criticize Japan's relations with South Africa. Its small size, about 100 active members, makes it relatively impotent. JAAC protests against banks such as Daiwa and Sumitomo which allegedly invested in South Africa indirectly through European financial companies and tries to pressure Japan's External Trade Organization to terminate activities designed to promote trade between the two countries and to close its office in South Africa. JAAC also demonstrated daily in front of the South African consulate in Tokyo in 1985, invite ANC representatives to Japan to participate in seminars and raised approximately \$10,000 to support the ANC's freedom school.³⁰ JAAC's efforts to influence the government to distance itself from Pretoria are opposed by powerful groups such as the Japan-South Africa Parliamentarians Friendship League, the Nippon Club of South Africa, and the Springbok Club in Tokyo.

The Friendship League, founded in 1984 and composed of approximately forty members of parliament from the conservative ruling Liberal Democratic party, advocates establishing full diplomatic relations with South Africa, strengthening economic ties, and promoting greater friendship between Japan and the Republic. They contend that greater economic interaction and technological exchanges with South Africa are likely to contribute to the elimination of apartheid because white South Africans would have to recognize the technological ability of non-white races. Furthermore, from their perspective, Japanese participation in South Africa's

30. Leavenworth, 'Japan's Complicity with Apartheid', p. 15; and Japan Anti-Apartheid Committee, *A Report to the Strategy Session of the Special Committee Against Apartheid*, (New York), 25 November 1985, p. 5.

economy helps improve conditions for black South Africans.³¹ Likewise, the Nippon Club, based in Johannesburg, endeavours to cultivate close ties between Japan and South Africa, encourages friendship among Japanese in South Africa, promotes trade, and organizes cultural and athletic activities. It also sponsors the Japanese School of Johannesburg designed to advance commerce by permitting businessmen to bring their families with them. The South African government provided the land and the Japanese government subsidizes the school by sending teachers from Japan and paying about 60 per cent of total operating costs.³² While the school interacts with the white community through cultural, educational, and sporting exchanges, there is no evidence to indicate any ties with blacks. Finally, the Springbok Club in Japan is an organization of Japanese businessmen and government officials who have been stationed in South Africa and South Africans engaged in commerce or associated with consular and other official activities in Japan. One of its major contributions is the development of extensive political, diplomatic, economic, and cultural networks between and within the two countries.³³

Conclusion

Despite strong official Japanese statements condemning apartheid and various sanctions which on the surface lend credibility to the generally accepted view that Japan has distanced itself from the white minority regime, available evidence suggests that these actions actually serve to deflect international criticism of the extensive economic ties between the two countries. Similarly, by encouraging Japanese companies to invest in and trade with black Africa and by providing financial assistance to selected African countries, Japan has succeeded in reducing opposition to its relationship with South Africa from the rest of the continent. Furthermore, the relative lack of international pressure on Japan can also be attributed to the absence of a highly-organized, broadly-based anti-apartheid movement in Japan, a general lack of awareness or concern about apartheid among the Japanese public, and the control of the country by a coalition of the ruling conservative Liberal Democratic Party, the national bureaucracy, big business and financial institutions which emphasize efficiency to the exclusion of concern about equity.

Although the Japanese have succeeded in projecting an anti-apartheid image while continuing to do business through locally-owned subsidiaries (a practice which Western firms might adopt as divestment pressures increase), widespread political violence in South Africa and mounting pressure on the

31. Japan Anti-Apartheid Committee, *Report*, p. 1; Moffat, 'Never Mind Apartheid While Business Pays', p. 1.

32. Morikawa, 'The Myth and Reality', p. 135.

33. Morikawa, 'The Myth and Reality'. Japanese officials advocate education and information as tools to eradicate prejudice. However, there is little evidence to indicate that the government is educating its own citizens about prejudices in South Africa.

SUNGUSUNGU: VILLAGE VIGILANTE GROUPS IN TANZANIA

RAY ABRAHAMS

3

VIGILANTES have arisen at many times in different parts of the world as defenders, often by force, of their view of the good life against those they see to be its enemies. They have been known by many different names, including 'vigilantes' which I use here generically and without implication of criticism or approval.¹ They have been relatively little studied, as compared with other elements of the 'informal' political sector such as banditry against which they themselves often emerge.² It may be that their common involvement in the protection of property and other interests has been less attractive to scholars than more radical activities, but it is surprising that their often independent stance towards the state has not received more attention from both critical and friendly analysts of that institution.

Despite modern images of lone armed figures on the New York subway, or of Charles Bronson or Clint Eastwood wreaking havoc in the city or the high plains of the West, vigilantes even in America are usually a group phenomenon.³ They are also typically a populist grass-roots development, although they may be used and abused by specific sectors of a local population. There is a strong element of self-help in them, but it is always self-help in the context of the state. Often they appear to be a frontier phenomenon, occurring literally on the edges of state influence and control. This is particularly clearly marked in the case of groups which have been documented for the frontier areas of the United States, such as the Regulators of the eighteenth century Carolina backwoods and the Montana Vigilantes of the 1860s, and it is also probably true of comparable

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1. The term 'vigilante' does not seem to be much used in Tanzania. This is convenient since it is, like 'anarchy', rarely used indigenously without strong positive or negative prejudice.

2. See W. E. Burrows, *Vigilante* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976) and H. Rosenbaum and P. Sederberg (eds.), *Vigilante Politics* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1976) for valuable discussion of the phenomenon, especially in the United States. It is notable that E. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels* (Manchester University Press, 1959) and D. Crummey (ed.), *Banditry, Rebellion and Social Protest in Africa* (James Currey, 1986), do not discuss vigilantes as such. Important exceptions for East Africa are S. Heald, 'Witches and Thieves: deviant motivations in Gisu society', *Man* 21 (1986), pp. 65-78 and 'Mafias in Africa: the rise of drinking companies and vigilante groups in Bugisu, Uganda', *Africa* 56 (1986), pp. 446-67.

3. This point is well made by Burrows, *Vigilante*, p. 274.

developments in China.⁴ Sometimes, however, such a frontier is by no means simply a spatial one. The state may in fact be clearly present in the areas concerned but its instruments of social order and control—the police and courts—fail to satisfy the felt needs of the people. In such a case the actual legitimacy of the state may be in question, or it may be that the state fails to provide the levels of security, policing, and punishment which people want. This can partly be a question of resources and efficiency, but such problems may also be accompanied by suspicion that the officers of the state are reluctant to act effectively, perhaps through fear or corruption. It can also happen that local groups and other sections of a population define as enemies a range of persons about whom the state has other views. Despite horrific exceptions, people who set out to harass minority and immigrant groups, or members of other races and religions, or those whom they define as witches, are not usually given explicit official support. Admittedly, the state may find it convenient to turn a blind eye to such harassment, but it is likely in due course to find it an embarrassment.⁵ Even when less problematic ‘public enemies’ are involved, such as cattle thieves, the relationship is liable to be uneasy and ambivalent. Officers of the state may welcome the help which vigilante organizations, such as modern neighbourhood watch groups, offer in controlling theft and other crime, but they may not be willing to countenance rough justice and lynch-law. The very existence of vigilante groups may be plausibly interpreted as a criticism of the state and, even if the state’s instruments of social control do not share that interpretation, they are not notoriously good power sharers and resent alternative organizations.⁶

The analyst of vigilantes is by definition operating in the shadows rather than the bright lights of consensus and legitimate authority, and the boundary between vigilante and criminal, like that between heroes and bandits or patriots and traitors, is both fluid and manipulable. This can be seen in a variety of contexts. The way in which some well-documented groups, such as the Carolina Regulators and Montana Vigilantes mentioned earlier, turned to clearly criminal activity is a fairly simple example; and it is possible that such flexibility of function, once a group is organized, has also been a factor in the development of the Mafia.⁷ It is also interesting to note that

4. For America, see especially Richard Brown in Rosenbaum and Sederberg (eds.), *Vigilante Politics and Burrows, Vigilante*. For China, see P. A. Kuhn, *Rebellion and its Enemies in Late Imperial China* (Harvard University Press, 1970).

5. For an account of such a process in the context of witch-finding in post-colonial Uganda, see R. G. Abrahams, ‘A modern witchhunt among the Lango of Uganda’, *Cambridge Anthropology*, 10 (1985), pp. 32–44.

6. A recent suggestion that vigilante groups might ‘police’ part of Cambridge received a very sharp response from the city’s Chief Superintendent, who promised tough action against people taking the law into their own hands; *Cambridge News*, 12 July 1986. It was later made clear that the police did welcome neighbourhood watch groups which kept to strict guidelines of acceptable behaviour.

7. Early Mafia as a source of law and order is discussed in Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels*.

the state itself may actually create such groups, and not surprisingly it tries hard to maintain control over them. Villagers in ancient China were at various times formed into groups of ten under a leader, and such groups were responsible for peace keeping and security and for the good behaviour of their members. This system may in fact have had a grass-roots origin, but the history of state interest and involvement in it is a long one, dating from at least the 11th century AD when it was revived at more or less the same time as a similar arrangement was established under Athelstan in medieval London.⁸ There again the populace were set up into groups of ten, or tithings, under a leader or tithingsman, and they were particularly expected to keep down livestock theft. Some 900 years later, we find a similar arrangement set up by the state for similar reasons in Dar es Salaam, possibly on the basis of Chinese forms, as the starting point of the well-known Tanzanian ten-house cell system.⁹

The material which I wish to examine in this paper is also Tanzanian, although it is not directly linked with ten-house cell organization. The mixed reactions of the government to the developments concerned are, however, closely connected with its broader interest in the combination of state control and participatory democracy which the establishment of the ten-house system reflected. As will be seen, the groups in question are organised by villagers themselves at village level, and they cover a wide area (close on 50,000 square miles) with a population of around four million.¹⁰ Some degree of variation in form and in the meaning of the system to the actors is to be expected in such circumstances, even though the basic patterns seem to be the same throughout the region. I have documented this when I can and I have drawn my data from a reasonably wide range of sources, but it is probably inevitable that some local variants have yet to come to my attention and that new ones will arise.

The origins of Sungusungu

In 1983 I received a letter from the Nyamwezi village of Busangi where I previously had done research. The letter-writer told me that a new system for protecting property had been set up in the village. Every man, young or old, had to be equipped with bow and arrows and with a gourd-stem whistle which was to be blown in emergencies. If a theft was committed, a hue and cry was raised and the thieves were to be followed by the young men of the village concerned. The whistles would alert the members of neighbouring

8. For China, see Kuhn, *Rebellion and its Enemies*, p. 24ff and F. Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China* (University of California Press, 1968), chapter 7. On London, see W. A. Morris, *The Frankpledge System* (Longman, Green, 1910).

9. K. Levine, 'The TANU Ten-house Cell System', in L. Cliffe and J. Saul (eds.), *Socialism in Tanzania* (East African Publishing House, 1972), vol 1, pp. 329-337.

10. This figure is based upon the 1978 Census with a moderate allowance for growth. It constitutes about one fifth of the total Tanzanian mainland population.

villages who would in turn forewarn others in the same way. There was a special fund to which all contributed and this was used to support the young men on such forays.

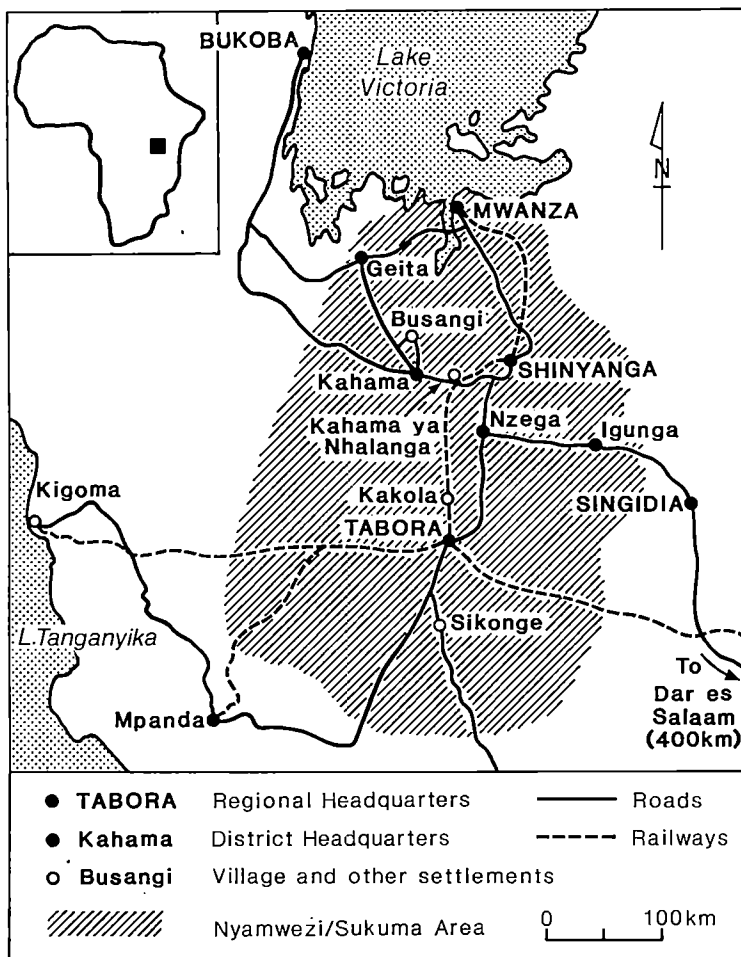
This system was still in action when I briefly revisited the area in early 1986, and it had by then been the subject of newspaper reports and academic discussion.¹¹ It has in fact become a lively talking point throughout Tanzania, though its spread appears interestingly to be confined so far to the Nyamwezi and Sukuma areas of the country whose inhabitants constitute about one sixth of the national population. Its brief history has already sharply highlighted a number of aspects of relations between local communities and the state, and it seems likely that its future development will do the same.

As far as I can tell, the pattern of organization in question is now found throughout the Nyamwezi/Sukuma area, and it is certainly extremely widespread in the Mwanza, Shinyanga and Tabora Regions. It is variously known as Sungusungu or as Busalama. This latter term is a Nyamwezi form of the Swahili word *usalama*, which means safety and security. The name Sungusungu is more problematic. It is the more widely used of the two names and it is a common idea in Tanzania as a whole that it is derived simply from the Swahili word *sungusungu*, which denotes a species of large black biting ants. I have also heard suggestions of this derivation among Nyamwezi themselves, and it is possible that the obvious connotations of 'biting power' are combined with a reference to black cloths with which Sukuma pastoralists sometimes drape themselves. In a seminar paper given in the Department of Sociology at the University of Dar es Salaam, however, Patrick Masanja derives the name from the Nyamwezi word *busungu* meaning poison, and connects it with the use of arrow poison by the groups concerned.¹² This view was also expressed to me in the northern Nyamwezi area, where Masanja appears to have collected his information. There, however, as in Shinyanga Region generally, the name Busalama seems to be more regularly used, and there is the added complication that the system itself seems to have started in the *busalama* name zone.

In his paper, Masanja stresses, quite correctly, that Sungusungu is not a single organized group with branches in different villages. Rather, each village has its own leadership and organization, and villages collaborate with each other without coordination from above. I may add here that in this and some other respects, Sungusungu is quite similar to a variety of other forms of Nyamwezi/Sukuma organization, a point to which I will return later. According to Masanja's informants, the first group was formed some

11. P. Masanja, 'Some Notes on the Sungusungu Movement' (unpublished paper, Department of Sociology, University of Dar es Salaam, 1984); M. Sabasaba and N. G. Rweyemamu, *Exercise of Punitive Powers outside the Judicial Process in Tanzania* (unpublished dissertation submitted for L1B degree, University of Dar es Salaam).

12. Masanja, 'Some Notes', p. 2.



time in 1982 in an area called Kahama ya Nhalanga which is near the border of Kahama and Nzega Districts, and a man called Kishosha was its founder. According to Sabasaba and Rweyemamu, who also quote this origin, the founder's full name was Kishosha Mang'ombe which means 'the returner of cattle', and he is said to have been given it following his successful work in earlier years against Maasai raiders in the Shinyanga area. He is reputed to possess effective medicines against raiders and to have powers as a seer.¹³ My own informants, however, said that the system began in the Buluma area of Jana, which lies on the eastern edge of Kahama District bordering on

13. Sabasaba and Rweyemamu, *Exercise of Punitive Powers*, p. 31. According to Brandström (personal communication) there were a number of influential Busalama pioneers in the same area, including a Mwana Mabonde who is said to have been a more moderate and cautious leader than Kishosha.

Shinyanga District. Its first leader was, they said, Nkanga son of Iyumbu. The two areas in question are in fact quite near each other, and which of them came first may be less important than their joint position near District and Regional boundaries in a cattle-rich zone.

Each village group has its own body of officers. There is a chief, *ntemi* (pl. *batemi*), at the top, who is supported by a second-in-command known as *ntwale* (pl. *batwale*). I was told that these *batemi* are often diviners and medicinal experts, *bafumu* (sing. *nfumu*), as too are many of the *batwale*. The main reason for this is the need to prepare medicines to protect members from attack when they go after thieves. Some medicines are drunk and others are rubbed into incisions. If an *ntemi* is not himself an *nfumu*, he will need to consult one to obtain such medicines. Below these leaders are six or so *makamanda* (sing. *kamanda*; cf. English commander) who organize the body of ordinary members. In addition, there are a few men known as *bahunashi*, whose job it is to summon people to assemblies, and there is also a secretary, *katibu*, who should keep records of proceedings and issue receipts for subscriptions. The subscription rate is thirty shillings per member in the Busangi area, and the fund made up of these subscriptions is looked after by the officers and some senior members known as *banamhala ba ntemi*, literally elders of the chief. In addition, the *ntemi* may also look after arrow poison for use in hunting cattle thieves, though some individuals may have such poison of their own in their private possession. Ordinary members, and especially younger ones, are simply called *askari*, the Swahili word for soldiers or other armed staff. The organization is primarily a male one, but unmarried women take part and have their own *makamanda* in some areas where they form a numerous contingent in a village. The groups have special songs which assert their loyalty to and dependence upon the support of the organization. Both male and female members often have a feather head-dress which they wear when undertaking Sungusungu business. The men are also typically stripped to the waist when in action, and were keen to take off their shirts before being photographed.¹⁴

The system has spread from village to village in an *ad hoc* way. In Busangi village in Kahama, for example, the organization was established in 1983 when the *ntemi* of the neighbouring Ngaya group came with his *ntwale* and some of their subordinates. A meeting was held at which an *ntemi*, *ntwale*, and a few others were chosen by the villagers. The delegation from Ngaya explained their role in catching thieves and restoring stolen property and admonished the new leaders to perform these duties properly. A feast

14. Martin Walsh has interestingly commented to me on the contrast between this and the more usual pattern of people wishing to *put on* their shirts before being photographed. I have heard recently, from Liz Wily, that the groups have now been asked by Government to wear shirts. This follows an earlier, unsuccessful attempt to get them to abandon their feather headdresses; see *Uhuru*, 11 November 1983. For an example of their songs, see Masanja, 'Some Notes', p. 20.

was provided by Busangi villagers for the occasion. The rank and file each brought a chicken and the new chief and *ntwale* volunteered a goat each. As far as I am aware, no elaborate ritual or medical concoctions were used on this occasion, although the traditional blowing of *lwanga* (a mixture of sorghum flour and water) over the parties concerned as a blessing took place.¹⁵ The Busangi leaders not long afterwards went to a few neighbouring areas to start up organizations there.

It appears that, when Sungusungu started, some governmental and party officials feared that it was an attempt to resuscitate traditional chiefship in the area. This fear, which stemmed partly from the title *ntemi* and partly from the use of installation ritual, has now largely been dispelled.¹⁶ It is indeed a common feature of the organization of Nyamwezi neighbourhood groupings and comparable associations for them to take the titles of their offices from the system of traditional chiefship. My own material on neighbourhood threshing groups with their 'millet chiefs' (*batemi ba busiga*) in the late 1950s bears ample witness to this tendency even in cases where the groups in question were, if anything, opposed to chiefship, and my correspondent in 1983 specifically compared these groups with Sungusungu.¹⁷ Fear of a connection to traditional chiefship has, however, been but one source of anxiety for the authorities. I was told, for instance, that, when the groups began to be formed in the Kahama area, there was a tendency for villagers to refer to them as *Chama cha Busalama*. The word *chama* is a Swahili term which has a wide range of referents in that area as elsewhere.¹⁸ It is likely to be used for any form of club or association, ritual or secular, but it is also the standard Swahili term for a political party, as in the name of the ruling *Chama cha Mapinduzi*, or Revolutionary Party. Tanzania is, of course, a one party state, and the use of the word *chama* for Sungusungu was, according to my informants, soon dropped under official pressure, so that it is now simply referred to in that area as Busalama.

These official fears about nomenclature and titles are somewhat reminiscent of earlier, colonial governmental over-reactions to grass-roots groupings such as dance societies like Beni.¹⁹ In the present case, however, such fears were less significant in themselves than as a symptom of a relatively well grounded perception that Sungusungu was a politically

15. Sabasaba and Rweyemamu, *Exercise of Punitive Powers*, p. 34ff, give a picture of somewhat more elaborate installation ritual than that described to me for Busangi.

16. Masanja, 'Some Notes', p. 1; *Uhuru*, 10 and 11 November 1983. Sabasaba and Rweyemamu, *Exercise of Punitive Powers*, p. 34, also stress this connection, but their picture of traditional chiefship is in some respects defective. Liz Wily, however, reports that one of her village informants compared the installation of Sungusungu *batemi* to that of chiefs, and it is possible that there is some wider currency for this idea in parts of the area.

17. For millet chiefs, see R. G. Abrahams, *The Political Organisation of Unyamwezi* (Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 168ff. More generally, see R. G. Abrahams, *The Peoples of Greater Unyamwezi* (International African Institute, 1967), p. 65.

18. Abrahams, *The Peoples of Greater Unyamwezi*, p. 63.

19. T. O. Ranger, *Dance and Society in Eastern Africa* (Heinemann, 1975), chapter 2 and *passim*.

important development which demanded careful attention. Once initial anxieties were calmed, it became clear to Government that there were reasons both to welcome and to be wary of the new development.

As I have mentioned, the Sungusungu system began quite specifically as a defence against theft. Armed cattle theft in particular seems to have caused a great deal of anxiety among villagers in the region, but there were also fears of other forms of theft and brigandage including highway robbery. This was part of a more widespread set of worries about law and order among ordinary Tanzanian citizens both in the rural areas and in the towns.²⁰ Sungusungu has been basically a rural development but groups have been called in from nearby villages to help in town, as I will describe. Conversations I have had with villagers in the Tabora and Kahama areas laid great stress upon these issues of security and on the failure of government and police to combat crime effectively. Some comments have been relatively charitable to the police, pointing to the shortages of vehicles and fuel which are essential for dealing with mobile rural criminals. Other comments are more critical and range from the suggestion that the police were often uninterested in dealing with offences to insinuations that they have at times been in league with criminals. Similar accusations have also been made against some village leaders. The establishment of Sungusungu groups in villages can be seen as a vote of no confidence in the state's ability to maintain security, and this in itself has clearly been something for officialdom to ponder over. At the same time, the fact that villagers have set up their own apparatus for solving their problems reflects a yet more worrying possibility that the state's failure, as Hyden puts it, to capture the rural areas economically, may be accompanied by a failure to maintain a hold on them politically.²¹ This has been seen at village level in the complaints of village officials that the Sungusungu leaders are too influential and in the suggestions that Sungusungu funds from subscriptions and penalties should be handed over to the formal village authorities.

In addition to this element of competition, it appears that the manner in which Sungusungu groups have dealt with known or suspected criminals has sometimes fallen short of governmental aspirations to see justice done through due process. Armed rustlers have been killed, as have some Sungusungu members in their confrontations with them. It is probable that some such deaths were unavoidable, and it seems clear that many villagers have shown great courage in the face of often desperate and well armed opposition. There are, however, also stories of failure to hand over captured criminals to the police and to the courts for trial, and in some cases this has involved the violent treatment, and even the alleged torture, of those

20. Discussion of such matters in everyday conversation is quite commonplace and there are many letters to newspapers on the needs to control robbery and violence.

21. G. Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania: underdevelopment and an uncaptured peasantry* (Heinemann, 1980).

apprehended.²² Sometimes the groups have concerned themselves with hunting out suspected witches, some of whom have apparently been killed. I was told that suspected witches have normally been expelled from their villages, but that occasionally people had 'seen them off' in more ways than one. It is clear that a belief in witchcraft is still strong in this and many other areas of Tanzania and witches are seen as a major public enemy. One of my informants in Tabora directly compared Sungusungu with the Mchapi movement of the 1930s, even though he did not see Sungusungu as itself mainly directed against witches. I should add also that there has more generally been a spate of witch killing in the Sukuma area dating back to the 1970s and that the Government has tried to quell this. An official enquiry into it was carried out in the early 1980s, and more recently a ban has been placed upon the activities of witchfinding diviners in the Shinyanga Region where the police commander has apparently alleged that an average of 19 people per month have been killed on suspicion that they are witches. Sungusungu groups as such do not, however, seem to be the only agents involved, and it appears that even the police themselves have not always been blameless in the treatment of such suspects.²³

However this may be, villagers with whom I have discussed the matter in the Tabora and Kahama areas are unanimous in their praise for the system. They argue that, since Sungusungu started, violent crime has noticeably decreased in the rural areas. I have no comprehensive evidence of past and present crime rates to support or oppose this commonly heard claim, although the little data I possess lends it some credence. Newspaper reports from Geita, for example, have quoted both government and party leaders as well as Sungusungu representatives themselves to the effect that violent deaths, armed robbery and cattle rustling have been substantially reduced in the District. In some cases, it appears that thieves have been caught with substantial numbers of stolen cattle or with money, and large quantities of weapons are reported to have been captured. More generally, however, it is argued that the mere creation of the Sungusungu groups has acted as a strong deterrent.²⁴ I do not have details of the situation prior to

22. Sabasaba and Rweyemamu, *Exercise of Punitive Powers*, pp. 40–41.

23. *Daily Nation* (Nairobi), 5 May 1986. I am grateful to Martin Walsh for providing me with this and other Kenyan material. A recent (undated) cutting from the *Daily News* (Dar es Salaam) notes that there are 130 old people, mainly women, living without proper shelter in Shinyanga market place. They are reported to have fled their villages for fear of being killed as suspected witches. It is unclear why this surge in witchcraft fears and anti-witchcraft action has occurred. It seems possible that it is partly a reaction against the constraints of living at close quarters in modern villages; R. G. Abrahams, *The Nyamwezi Today* (Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 81. It is interesting that the idea of creating special 'witches' villages', which I noted in that book was reiterated by the Prime Minister in a speech to Sungusungu reported in the *Daily News*, 27 October 1983.

24. An ominous exception to the general pattern is the report in the *Daily News*, 25 May 1986, that a new wave of cattle rustling involving machine guns and other weapons had arisen in Tabora Region. See also the report on raiding in Shinyanga District in the *Daily News*, 7 August 1986.

Sungusungu in Busangi in Kahama District, but it seems that, although the groups there have been active, they have not had to deal with much very serious violent crime so far. According to the material at my disposal, the group has dealt with 34 offenders in the three years they have been operating, and the maximum penalty that has been paid to them is two head of cattle. The cases involved are set out in Table 1. All the above offenders were from Busangi and immediately adjoining areas. As with former neighbourhood courts, the penalties are typically consumed by the villagers, although I cannot be sure that this has happened in each of the listed cases. I was told that people are usually dealt with by the Sungusungu themselves if police fail to prosecute or a court could not convict because of shortage of hard evidence, and it seems clear that in some cases people are dealt with on the basis of bad reputations. Unlike the courts, the groups are said to be ready to rely on divination as a source of vital clues to people's guilt. At the time of my recent visit, a case arose in a Kahama village which illustrates some of the problems this may cause. It was discovered that some 4600 shillings of village funds were missing, and village officials combined with Sungusungu to summon a diviner. The diviner identified three culprits, including the Village Secretary who was one of the officials who had decided to summon him. The Secretary was outraged and higher level Party officials were called in. In the end the Secretary was exculpated at a meeting between these officials and the villagers and, according to my most recent information, one of the other two suspects, a watchman, was eventually convicted in court. The case was further complicated by the fact that the diviner was the Secretary's father-in-law, and it was more generally a most unwelcome embarrassment for the officials who were called in to mediate. Further friction was avoided by a Party decision to transfer the Secretary to their town headquarters.

TABLE I
Offences dealt with by Sungusungu in Busangi

<i>Offence</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Offenders</i>	<i>Penalty</i>
Cattle theft	5	all men	1 head of cattle
Highway robbery	3	2 men and 1 youth	1-2 head of cattle
Fraud	1	man	1 head of cattle
Other theft (clothes and food)	8	3 men, 3 youths, 2 women	1 head of cattle
Alcohol offences	3	3 women	1 goat—1000 shillings
Fraternizing with ostracized villagers	8	8 women—attending a wedding there	1 chicken
Quarrels and insults	5	3 men, 2 youths	1 goat
Blowing whistle in false alarm	1	man	1 head of cattle

In Busangi, I was told that a person who is believed to have committed an offence is ostracized by fellow villagers until he or she confesses to it. The case of the 8 wedding-goers cited in Table I involved a breach of such

ostracism. The groups are subtle in their handling of such cases. Fearing that offenders may complain to the authorities if they are simply tried and convicted by their neighbours (as occasionally happened with neighbourhood court hearings in earlier post-independence days), they have adopted a policy of ostracism which is brought to an end when the person concerned summons a meeting and confesses. The person then has to volunteer to pay a penalty, and, if the offer is considered insufficient, the assembled Sungusungu simply remain silent. A higher offer is then typically made, and if this is acceptable the assembly applauds. It was argued to me that the person simply convicts and sentences himself in such circumstances, and as such has no ground for complaint. I was told that ostracism in such cases is more stringent than in earlier days since it is typically recognized by neighbouring villages in addition to the victim's own.²⁵

Government, Party and Sungusungu

It is not surprising in the sort of situation which I have outlined that Government and Party should be anxious to develop some control over the Sungusungu groups. On the negative side, it seems likely that the groups sometimes act in ways which are actually illegal and there is naturally deep concern that their activities can so easily get out of hand.²⁶ I have already given evidence of this concerning witchcraft accusations and other procedures, and there have been other, though less serious, issues such as government's desire to prevent the groups from dealing with adultery cases. More positively, it is clear that the groups are able to provide an effective mechanism to help maintain law and order, and this is clearly valuable to the state if it can be suitably harnessed.

Official reaction has been predictably mixed in these circumstances. This reflects both paradoxes in the situation and different perceptions of these. Initial negative responses were quickly followed by more positive comments on the groups concerned. At an early stage, Julius Nyerere, then still President, was much taken by the way in which they represented a grass roots initiative. He described them as a revolutionary force within the villages which ought to be encouraged, rather than harrassed, by

25. On earlier conflicts, see Abrahams, *The Nyamwezi Today*, p. 43. For earlier patterns of ostracism, see Abrahams, *The Political Organisation of the Nyamwezi*, p. 161. My account of procedures is based on information for Kahama District and it is possible that the Tabora situation differs from this.

26. Sabasaba and Rweyemamu (*Exercise of Punitive Powers*, p. 51ff) are emphatic that the groups are illegal. A recent Parliamentary question asked under what authority the Sungusungu groups fell. The reply stated that they were under the guidance of Regional Party leaders. The reply also compared the groups with the People's Militia; *Daily News*, 19 July 1986. Sabasaba and Rweyemamu reject such a comparison. A new sidelight was thrown on outside reaction to the groups when the same questioner went on to ask if any tribe could set up a defence group. The reply said that the groups involved Tanzanians in particular areas and not tribes; *Daily News*, 19 July 1986.



bureaucracy, and he said that all who had been arrested for such activities should be released.²⁷ His support for them has continued in the face of pleas and complaints from some less sympathetic officials in the regions concerned, and, in May 1986, as Chairman of the Party though no longer President, he roundly condemned some continuing attempts to prosecute them. It appears that at that time there were still some 36 unsettled cases in Tabora Region in which Sungusungu members were accused of wrongly seizing cattle from suspected rustlers and returning them to their assumed rightful owners. Nyerere is reported to have said that the law under which they were charged was a bad law because it worked against the people's interests and was creating conflict between people and state. He is said to have added that Sungusungu were in a better position than the police and courts to know who thieves and rustlers were.²⁸ Support from other sources has in general been more cautious than this, and most official comments temper their praise for the groups with an emphasis on the need for Sungusungu to be fully law-abiding and to cooperate with police and other agencies in carrying out their tasks. Particular stress tends to be laid in such contexts on the need to hand over offenders to the police and to the courts rather than taking the law into their own hands. One must of course remember in this context that on occasion more has happened than the seizure of stolen cattle and that alleged rustlers and others have at times actually been killed.²⁹

Relations between Sungusungu and the Party have also been a major point of focus in official reaction and, in line with Nyerere's comments, there has been some tendency for Party leaders to be more supportive than the bureaucracy and the law enforcement agencies. In March 1984, Rashidi Kawawa, the Party's Chief Secretary, addressed a national youth gathering at Arusha and spoke warmly of the groups. Like Nyerere, he described them as a revolutionary force whose work was to guard citizens and property, both private and public, in the villages. He stressed how violent crime and corruption had been stemmed in the areas concerned and he noted that the groups were not paid for their work but did it out of public spirit. Their only enemies were the enemies of the revolution, he argued, and young people everywhere should follow their example. Kawawa described Sungusungu in this speech as working under the guidance of the Party and he also went on to say that 'Sungusungu are young CCM members who are fulfilling the party's call for mass action to maintain security'. He also described them as a front line force in the attempt to build socialism (*ujamaa*).³⁰ Such rhetoric can also be encountered at the local level. I

27. Masanja, 'Some Notes', p. 1

28. *Sunday News*, 25 May 1986.

29. See the Prime Minister's speech in Geita District, reported in the *Daily News*, 27 October 1983.

30. *Uhuru*, 22 March 1984.

was told by a divisional party officer that Sungusungu were party men and that CCM was the party of Busalama. This partly harks back to the naming problem noted earlier, but it also involves an attempt to incorporate Sungusungu within the Party, rather than trying simply to demarcate a boundary between the two. It should perhaps be added here that Party membership is actually much less widespread than such pronouncements assert, and some of my informants clearly saw Sungusungu as something quite distinct from CCM.

In addition, Government has gone beyond a simple attempt to encourage the groups and keep them under control. For there has also been a substantial attempt to use them for a range of tasks which they themselves did not apparently envisage in their own original 'terms of reference'. This involves a sort of hijacking of the groups' time and energy for governmental purposes. In October 1983, for example, the Prime Minister, Edward Sokoine, addressed a rally of 6,000 Sungusungu in Kasamwa in Geita District. He praised them for their 'revolutionary' activity and warned them to stay within the law. He also publically urged the Mwanza Region authorities to deploy about 1,000 Sungusungu members from the villages to weed out racketeers and loiterers in Mwanza Town, which had so far failed to implement the national campaign against racketeering and economic sabotage. At the same time he promised a sum of 200,000 shillings for the Geita District groups which they should be allowed to spend as they wished. During the Mwanza exercise they would be allowed to use their traditional weapons and wear their usual outfits.³¹ More recently, I encountered Sungusungu in Tabora District preparing to round up tax defaulters, and I was told that those in Kahama had been instructed to do the same in due course. When I asked people in Busangi how they would respond to this directive, I was told that they could not really refuse.³² It is hard to say how well the system will survive such governmental take-over initiatives, which are reminiscent of the 'socialism from above' which threatened *ujamaa*. At the same time, it appears that comparable locally generated activities can arise. Thus the recent purchase of a lorry for Busangi village was financed by the sale of produce of a village field whose cultivation was 'policed' by the Basalama.³³

31. *Daily News*, 27 October 1983.

32. Liz Wily has confirmed to me that Government and Party have been quick to attempt to gain control over the activities of Sungusungu groups in Tabora. Coupled with this, it appears that groups there do not deal with cases themselves but bring them before an official Village Disputes Committee whose existence antedates Sungusungu. As I have noted, variation is to be expected in a loose decentralized system of this sort and it is interesting that Wily mentions a possible attempt to achieve greater coordination. One of the pioneer leaders is said to have been chosen to travel among the villages encouraging discipline and attitudes consistent with the Party's ideals and programmes.

33. For a discussion of the importance of successful 'policing' of village agricultural projects by local militia in the Dodoma area, see R. Thiele, 'Villages as Economic Agents: the accident of social reproduction', in R. G. Abrahams (ed.), *Villagers, Villages, and the State in Modern Tanzania* (African Studies Centre, Cambridge, 1985), pp. 81-109.

Sungusungu in comparative perspective

I have mentioned that the development of Sungusungu seems so far to be confined to the Nyamwezi and Sukuma areas of Tanzania. This is of some interest, because the problems which the groups set out to combat are by no means simply confined to that region and there have been suggestions that similar groups be set up elsewhere. There has, for instance, been widespread violent cattle rustling in the Tarime area to the north east but, despite some official encouragement, villagers there seem to have done no more than sporadically take the law into their own hands when police action has failed.³⁴ I have also heard that some groups may be starting in Singida Region after violent raiding there early in 1986, although I understand they have been told that group leaders must be chosen from the local Party leadership. It is of course possible that positive governmental interest in such groups is off-putting if they have not yet been formed, and there may be other reasons for their failure to develop elsewhere, such as the existence of alternative arrangements. However this may be, there are some reasons why one might not be surprised to see them emerge among Nyamwezi and Sukuma.

A history of comparable forms of organization in the area is significant in this context, although the issue is a complicated one. A 1983 newspaper report notes the temporary emergence of earlier localized campaigns against cattle rustling and of a rather sinister protection league for cattle owners in the area in the 1960s and 1970s. I was also told at one stage that there was an organization known as Sungusungu operating in parts of Nyamwezi country in early colonial days, but it seems likely that the claim arose from a confused connection of the groups with the Rugaruga regiments which used to serve the chiefs. It is probable that this conflation also partly lies behind the tendency of newspaper reports to describe Sungusungu as 'traditional' (*wa jadi* in Swahili), though the groups' indigenous base and their weaponry and headdresses are also probably important in this context. The question of their weapons is in fact intriguing. The choice of bows and arrows is said by some to stem from a dream of Kishosha that it was only through a return to these traditional weapons that the people could free themselves from the attacks of cattle thieves, even though the latter might be armed with modern guns. It is not wholly clear to what extent the use of these weapons represents a 'nativistic' vision in addition to more practical advantages deriving from their ready availability and the fact that government in any case would scarcely tolerate the widespread use of guns by groups of this sort. Certainly, bows and arrows have a number of important resonances in

34. *Uhuru*, 28 January and 13 February 1985; *Daily Nation*, 2 May 1986. It appears also from a letter to *Uhuru*, 28 January 1985, that the name Sungusungu has been adopted by some groups of youths in the Kilimanjaro Region as a front for criminal activity.

Nyamwezi and Sukuma culture where they serve as major symbols of paternal ancestry and indeed of male identity.³⁵

Beyond the question of specific antecedents, it is probably significant that there has been historically a wide range of small-scale groupings in the area with a variety of functions. Thus there have been dance societies, cultivating teams, spirit possession and other ritual associations, hunting groups, threshing teams, and more general forms of neighbourhood organization including the Sukuma *basumba batale*. These have provided individuals and households, both in everyday life and in emergencies, with many different forms of interaction and support additional to those of kinship and the formal governmental institutions of traditional chiefship and its post-independence replacements. The relation of such associations to the kinship system has generally been one of complementarity rather than conflict, though the potential for the latter is highlighted in the rituals of initiation into some of them. With regard to chiefship and other governmental systems, there has been a more mixed history of symbiosis and conflict. This begins at least as early as the struggles Cory mentions between Sukuma chiefs and *basumba batale* in the early years of this century, and it continues, as I have elsewhere documented, through to and beyond a spell of serious troubles between neighbourhood and chiefship in the late colonial period.³⁶ The longstanding presence of such groups in the area, and the sometimes uneasy division of labour between them and the state in one form or another, seems to be a major persistent feature of the Nyamwezi and Sukuma political scene. It can be seen to form part of a continuously monitored and negotiated equilibrium between public service from the centre and freedom and autonomy at local level. The Nyamwezi and Sukuma polity has been a dual one in this sense and Sungusungu seems to hark back more to this than to chiefship itself.

It is true that such forms of grouping and association seem often to have borrowed titled roles, and possibly associated ideas, from chiefship and other external forms of organization. But more important than such borrowing is the fact that the groups have themselves provided a continuing model and a source of practical experience for villagers who wish to organize

35. *Uhuru*, 10 and 11 October 1983. Sabasaba and Rweyemamu interestingly use the term 'neo-traditional' to characterize the groups. With regard to bows and arrows as symbols, see Rev. P. Bösch *Les Banyamwezi, Peuple de l'Afrique Orientale* (Münster, 1930), pp. 125, 459 and Abrahams, *The Peoples of Greater Unyamwezi*, p. 47. In the Parliamentary reply mentioned earlier, it was also pointed out that the groups used 'traditional' weapons, with an apparent implication that this blurred the illegality issue.

36. For a general discussion of associations and neighbourhood organization, see Abrahams, *The Political Organization of Unyamwezi*, chapter 8 and *The Peoples of Greater Unyamwezi*, pp. 63–5. See also H. Cory, 'The Buyeye, a Secret Society of Snake-charmers in Sukumaland, Tanganyika Territory', *Africa*, 16 (1946), pp. 160–178; *The Indigenous Political System of the Sukuma and Proposals for Political Reform* (Kampala, 1954), p. 73; 'The Buswezi', *American Anthropologist*, 57 (1955), pp. 923–52. Brandström (personal communication) notes that some villages explicitly link Sungusungu to earlier customary obligations to respond to an alarm call (*mwano*) from a neighbour; see Abrahams, *The Nyamwezi Today*, p. 70.

their own affairs. While I would not want to argue that such know-how was lacking in other areas, it would, I think, be hard to find another section of the Tanzanian population where it was so fully developed. As such, it seems understandable that groups like Sungusungu should emerge in an area where a great deal of their basic organization and structure is mirrored in one or other part of presently or previously existing groupings which villagers have long experience of running for themselves.

At the same time as this point throws some light on the roots of Sungusungu in the Nyamwezi/Sukuma area, it also helps to clarify some problems of the nature of the phenomenon we are dealing with. Masanja writes of Sungusungu as 'a movement' and this is a convenient term, if too much is not read into it. Masanja justifies its use with a number of arguments. He points to the decentralized and grass-roots nature of the system, which I myself have also confirmed, and he suggests that the groups satisfy the definition of a movement as a 'collective endeavour to promote or resist change in the society of which it forms a part'. A main thrust of his discussion seems to be, however, that Sungusungu forms part of an emergent class struggle arising out of colonial and post-colonial developments in the political economy of the country and its rural areas. I myself would hesitate to go much further in this context than my previous analysis of custom in the area as a creation and possession of the people which has been a source of power and identity for them in a wider world where they in general occupy a relatively humble status.³⁷ It is true and important that Sungusungu seems to be a truly grass-roots development and I have no evidence of any control or manipulation of it by better off or other sectional elements in village society. If there is a 'class' element in the situation, it is perhaps to be seen most clearly in the idea, to some extent implicit in Nyerere's support, that the rise of Sungusungu partly involves a recapture of village-level organization by villagers themselves in the face of increased state influence and the emergence of the village in the 1970s as a formal corporate unit from which many villagers can easily feel alienated.³⁸ The role of the new villages in the rise of Sungusungu may in fact be quite complicated. It is possible that they have contributed to the problems which Sungusungu sets out to solve, not only in the way I have outlined but also through their nucleated settlement patterns which have created substantial space from which predators, human as well as animal, may operate. At the same time, however, it seems likely, too, that such compact settlement has itself facilitated the rapid creation and mobilization of Sungusungu groups throughout the region.

Leaving this more particular issue aside, one can see that an unglossed

37. Abrahams, *The Nyamwezi Today*, p. 130 ff.

38. For a discussion of the idea of villages as a 'class', see Thiele, 'Villages as Economic Agents', p. 85.

designation of Sungusungu as a movement might pose further difficulties. Giddens follows Blumer in his description of social movements as 'collective enterprises to establish a new order of life',³⁹ and he adds that movements do not characteristically operate with fixed locales and well-defined role systems. His emphasis is clearly laid on fluid social change. In partial contrast to this, however, it is not so much *a* new social order as social order in a more general sense which Sungusungu has most explicitly sought to establish. Moreover, the groups have relatively clear and well established frameworks of leadership and organizational roles and well-structured forms of procedure.

Yet we are undoubtedly dealing with change in this context and that in more than one time frame. On the one hand, Sungusungu is a recent mass reaction on an unprecedented scale to problems of order in the area, and it is, as such, a new phenomenon, despite its roots in earlier organizational forms. Moreover, it itself has undergone a very rapid process of development from an initial, and apparently secretive, beginning in one or two villages to a Nyamwezi and Sukuma-wide phenomenon.⁴⁰ If it was aptly describable as a movement, albeit a reformist one, in 1983 when it was still quite new, it is perhaps at least as aptly spoken of in 1986 as a system, though one not properly integrated into the state apparatus. It is here that the idea of organizational templates and a long history of interaction between community and state can help us to understand the peculiar features of Sungusungu as a modern grass-roots development which has gelled very quickly into fairly clear cut and remarkably effective customary forms.

Another, more specific approach to such groups has recently been made by Heald, who has interestingly compared the vigilantes of Bugisu in Uganda with 'mafias' as Hobsbawm has discussed them in his classic study of 'primitive rebels'.⁴¹ Heald has rightly been keen to show that she is dealing with much more than a particular East African phenomenon, and she has usefully emphasized both the pattern of decentralization (in most cases) and the way in which early 'mafias' appear to have provided a form of local law and 'government' where political change has left a power vacuum in a rural area. She also pays attention to growing differentiation among the Gisu in respect to land and power, and this may help to make the comparison a specially apt one in that case. It is possible that this last phenomenon will emerge more clearly in the Nyamwezi area. For the present, however, the type of economic and power structure among the Nyamwezi and Sukuma seems too different from that of post-feudal Sicily and southern Italy to allow a truly fruitful comparison in this case. I suspect too that 'mafias' may not be the most apt general term if one wishes to broaden ones'

39. Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society* (Polity Press, 1984), p. 204.

40. *Uhuru*, 10 November 1983.

41. Heald, 'Witches and Thieves' and 'Mafias in Africa'.

comparison to include a large range of other types of grouping, though this is a relatively small point. Certainly, there are enough examples of vigilante groups spread widely over time and space, to make them in themselves a useful subject of comparative discussion.

More generally, it is not clear how far the overarching framework of social banditry, which Hobsbawm has so interestingly developed for his studies of 'mafias' and similar groupings, provides a useful background against which to view the material I have been considering.⁴² Of course, the vigilante groups themselves pose problems for the state, since they lack a formal legal base and they have arisen in response to state failure to meet local needs. There are also clearly some state functionaries and others who wish to stress the illegality of the groups and their activities, and there are cases where the innocent have been badly harassed, and worse, by the groups. At the same time, one of the most interesting aspects of Sungusungu (and indeed of Gisu vigilantism as well) is the depth of the widely-shared desire for peace and order which led to their emergence and which genuinely seems to inform most of their activities. This is clearly marked by both the names Basalama and Banalukoosi which are used in the two areas respectively, though such names can be misleading and one must bear in mind the flexibility and changeability of such groups elsewhere. All this bears some relation to Hobsbawm's thesis, to the extent that Sungusungu criminality can be seen in part, as Nyerere has implied, as a joint product of the state's claim to a monopoly in law and order and its failure to deliver the goods. Yet I am hesitant to talk of Sungusungu generally as 'bandits', social or otherwise, if only because the term then tends to blur unduly the distinction between most of them and their activities and what one would more normally consider banditry to be. Bandits are usually criminal groups who live either on the margins or in relatively inaccessible regions of the societies they raid and pillage. 'Social bandits', as I understand the term, are those who are thought to have turned to such activities as a result of injustice in an unfair society. The unjustly privileged are their main targets, and, because of this, the 'social bandits' often receive support from the masses who do not themselves participate in banditry. Sungusungu are, however, substantially 'the masses', at least at the level of the Nyamwezi and Sukuma area of Tanzania, and their enemies are not so much the privileged as those whom they rightly or wrongly define as criminal. The 'bandits' in the scenario (social or otherwise) are the brigands and rustlers against whom they try to defend their communities. It remains only to add that the idea of such brigands and rustlers as victims of society admired and cherished by the populace is quite alien to the scene I have been discussing; and the fact that Sungusungu are, as ordinary villagers, their sworn enemies seems more important than comparison with them at the present time.

42. There are a number of papers in Crummey (*Banditry, Rebellion and Social Protest in Africa*) which consider the value of Hobsbawm's approach to African material, including a useful general discussion by Austen.

THE FATE OF THE NILE CROCODILE IN AFRICAN WATERWAYS

MWELMA C. MUSAMBACHIME

'IT IS STRANGE that the loathly crocodile can provide sufficient interest to provide the wherewithal for one of our periodic talks', said C. R. S. Pitman, then Chief Game Warden of Uganda, in an address to the Uganda Society in 1941.¹ His views were shared by many in the audience and many more within and outside Uganda. The Nile Crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*) was and still is the most hated and feared creature in the African waterways (rivers, lakes, swamps and marshes). R. C. Maugham, a well travelled South African hunter and trader in East and South-Central Africa, observed in 1906 that the Crocodile was a 'veritable curse of... the African rivers', and in his opinion there was 'probably no more dangerous, more stealthily or more universally hated and feared branch of creation than the [the crocodile]'.² The fear and hate for the crocodile stemmed from its man-eating activities which European travellers, traders, missionaries and colonial administrators described in glowing, horrid and lurid terms.³ Some of them were true, others were obviously exaggerated to add to the element of adventure and to stir hate and dislike for the crocodile among the Europeans and, to some extent, Africans as well. The crocodile, like the wolf in North America, came to be seen as better dead than alive.⁴ The following quotations confirm this attitude. The first comes from a 1973 book by Alistair Graham and Peter Beard:

For the most part, man gets on with the crocodile about as well as he did with dragons; and just as he did with dragons, he will banish them all from the remotest parts of the earth... for civilised man will not tolerate wild beasts that eat his children, his cattle or even fish he deems to be his; that would be regression into barbarism.⁵

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1. C. R. S. Pitman, 'About Crocodiles', *The Uganda Journal*, 9 (1941), p. 89.
2. R. C. F. Maugham, *Portuguese East Africa* (London: Murray, 1906), p. 50.
3. For a representative sample, see Dugald Campbell, *In the Heart of Bantuland* (London: Seeley, Service, 1925), pp. 286-8; Harry Johnston, *The British Central Africa* (London: Methuen, 1896), p. 355; Harry Johnston, *George Grenfell and the Congo*, 2 volumes (London: Hutchinson, 1908); A. S. H. Gibbons, *Africa from the South to the North Through Barotseland*, Vol. I (London: J. Lane, 1904), pp. 1-81.
4. For a good discussion on the status and fate of the North American Wolf, see Barry Holstun Lopez, *Of Wolves and Men* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1978).
5. Alistair Graham and Peter Beard, *Eyelids of Morning: the mingled destinies of crocodiles and men* (New York: New York Geographic Society, 1973), p. 11.

The second, by I. S. C. Parker and R. M. Watson, dates from 1971.

The disappearance of crocodile from the major waters . . . was inevitable. As a result of predation on humans, their interference with gill-net fishing and human competition for optional crocodile habitats, we consider free-ranging crocodile incompatible with human populations. Any attempt to re-introduce crocodile into major waters . . . which support large expanding fishing industries would be similar to reintroducing wolves and bears to England and, as such, a waste of time and money.⁶

Like the wolf, the crocodile was regarded as a 'pest' and 'vermin' which had to be destroyed whenever and wherever it was found.⁷ This article is a discussion of how this attitude has contributed to determining the fate of the Nile Crocodile in African waterways. Many have been destroyed for economic reasons—to promote fishing or to collect skins for sale—and many for security reasons—to prevent loss of life—and many for sport. In all these, there was no care whether the ecological balance in the waterways was disturbed as long as interests were served.

A crocodile, which begins its life as an egg, is an amphibian, living on land and in water. It spends the day basking in the sun and the night in water. On land it is generally timid and clumsy and takes to the water for protection on the slightest suspicion of danger. Once in the water, it becomes courageous, daring, cunning, and vicious and attacks its victims, man, game and domestic animals alike with lightning speed.⁸ Sometimes it lurks and stalks its victims before attacking. Sometimes it attacks dugout canoes or boats, capsizing them and seizing an occupant. Cases are also recorded of victims being caught from large vessels and of crocodiles entering fishermen's huts and dragging sleeping occupants into the water.⁹

6. Published in H. B. Cott and A. C. Pooley (eds.), *The Status of Crocodiles* (originally a paper contributed to the First Working of Crocodile Specialists, sponsored by the New York Zoological Society and organized by the Survival Commission, IUCN, at the Bronx Zoo, New York, 15–17 March 1971), Volume II (Morges, Switzerland: International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, January 1972), p. 75.

7. Maugham, *Portuguese East Africa*, p. 52; Tom Marvel, *The New Congo* (London: Macdonald, 1949), p. 247.

8. For a good discussion on the crocodile see C. A. W. Guggisberg, *Crocodiles: their natural history, folklore and conservation* (David and Charles, 1972). George Schweinfurth, *The Heart of Africa Vol. II* (Chicago: Gregg International, 1969), p. 336; Patrick Chalmers, *Sport and Travel in East Africa* (Phillip Allan, 1934), p. 58; A. A. Belliars, *Reptiles* (Hutchinson, 1968), p. 105; Campbell, *In the Heart*, p. 287; J. Sloane Campbell, 'Stories from Barotseland', *Northern Rhodesia Journal* (1953), p. 58.

9. D. Livingstone, 'An Attack by the Nile Crocodile on a Small Boat', *Copea* (1962), pp. 203–4; Maugham, *Portuguese East Africa*, p. 268; Johnston, *Central Africa*, p. 355; Gibbons, *Africa Vol. I*, p. 169; Guggisberg *Crocodiles*, p. 141; Campbell, *In the Heart*, p. 288. This is confirmed by information I received in interviews with several informants. Muyembe Besa, Chisenga Island, 14 May 1975; Fisto Mulonga, Mutamina, 21 April 1975.

Attacks by crocodiles are difficult to avoid. They are brilliantly planned and executed and come when least expected. When victims are caught, they are held underwater and eventually drown. Whilst holding the victim, the crocodile throws its body into a series of vigorous twists and thrashing emotions, detaching limbs and tearing the victim into smaller pieces which it swallows. To swallow (or bolt), the crocodile throws its head above the water, a procedure which is probably necessary because swallowing involves opening of the palatal flaps.¹⁰ There are reports that sometimes the crocodile stores carcasses of its victims in a burrow, leaving them to decompose before eating them. This has yet to be proved by researchers.¹¹ An animal with these characteristics, despite Pitman's observation, is likely to be the subject of much interest. The image that he presents, however, is less than the whole truth.

Precolonial attitude towards the crocodile

An important starting point is to observe that the behaviour of crocodiles towards man varied from place to place. In some locations, such as on the shores of Lake Mweru, and along the Shire and Lualaba rivers, crocodiles were very aggressive and dangerous so that palisades and stockades had to be built on the edge of the river bank or lake shore where people bathed or drew water.¹² In other places, contraptions similar to the shaduf used in Sudan and Egypt were constructed above the shore or river bank to allow women and children to draw water without risking being caught by crocodiles.¹³ Apart from taking these precautions, individuals and the community as a whole used protective medicines to shield them from attacks.¹⁴ In other areas, by contrast, for example along parts of the Congo (now Zaire) River, no precautions were taken whatsoever and few injuries were sustained. So it seems likely that the aggression in the crocodile might be due not to some natural characteristic but to the non-availability of alternative kinds of prey.¹⁵

The attitude and disposition of the African people towards the crocodile thus differed from one area to another. In some areas, although the

10. Belliars, *Reptiles*, p. 105.

11. Belliars, *Reptiles*, p. 105; Johnston, *Central Africa*, p. 355. This is strongly disputed by H. B. Cott, a scientist who conducted research on crocodiles in Uganda and Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia). H. B. Cott, 'Scientific Results of an Inquiry into the Ecology and Economic Status of the Nile Crocodile (*Crocodilus Niloticus*) in Uganda and Northern Rhodesia', *Transactions of the Zoological Society of London*, 29 (1961), p. 303.

12. R. J. Moore, 'Industry and Trade on the Shores of Lake Mweru', *Africa*, 2 (1937), pp. 105-1; W. F. P. Burton, *Luba Religion, Magic and Belief* (Brussels: Tervuren, 1961), p. 115; Interviews with Puta Elders (Putu, 24 September 1979) and Headman Kapala (Kapala, 24 August 1979).

13. Daniel Crawford, *Thinking Black* (New York: George H. Doran, 1912), p. 459; Campbell, *In the Heart*, pp. 286-7; *Echoes of Service* (EOS) (1899), p. 172; EOS (1904) p. 237; Johnston, *Central Africa*, p. 355.

14. Interview with Headman Kapena (14 September 1979).

15. Belliars, *The Life of Reptiles*, p. 396.

crocodile was feared, it was generally regarded as being less dangerous than the hippopotamus. W. H. Bentley, a missionary who spent many years working among Zairean societies living along the river Zaire recorded an attitude towards the crocodile which was also shared by others in central Africa. He reported that these societies often affirmed that

the crocodile of itself is a harmless creature and thoroughly do they believe this that in some places they go into the river to catch fish with a bait and attend to their traps without hesitation.¹⁶

In some areas of central Africa, missionaries and administrators were surprised at the indifference of the African people to crocodiles so that often they crossed rivers even when neck-deep without hesitation and others went into the rivers and lakes to bathe, wash their clothes and draw water without taking the slightest precaution at all.¹⁷ The belief among these people was that crocodile attacks were the work of witches or were a form of punishment for wrong-doing meted out to the victims.¹⁸

Some societies, by contrast, were very aggressive towards crocodiles. The Tana-wa-Pokomo living on the shores of Lake Tana (Turkana) in Northern Kenya, for example, regarded crocodiles as their 'most deadly foes' and waged a war of extermination against them. And to encourage this, no man was allowed to marry until he had killed a crocodile.¹⁹

In some areas of Africa, the crocodile performed a number of ethical, ritual and spiritual functions. In some parts of west Africa, if a man was suspected or accused of committing adultery with another man's wife, he was forced to swim across a crocodile infested section of a river to prove his innocence or guilt.²⁰ In Buluzi, one king named Sipopa took pleasure in having persons accused of witchcraft and murder thrown into the Zambezi river to be eaten by crocodiles which teemed in the river.²¹ In Buganda, crocodiles were from time to time given human offerings to propitiate the ancestral spirits.²² Yet among a number of societies in central and southern Africa, the crocodile was revered and held in high esteem. Like the wolf among the Eskimo, it was adopted as a totem by clans wielding political

16. W. Holman Bentley, *Pioneering in the Congo* (Methuen, 1911), p. 391. See also Guggisberg, *Crocodiles*, pp. 144, 146; Campbell, 'Stories', p. 56; D. Berwick, 'Mystery Isle, Mweru-Marsh', *Northern Rhodesian Journal*, (1953), p. 58.

17. Johnston, *Central Africa*, p. 355; H. L. Duff, *Nyasaland Under Colonial Office* (George Bell, 1903), p. 132; Bentley, *Pioneering*, pp. 157-8; C. R. S. Pitman, *Report on Faunal Survey of Northern Rhodesia with special reference to Game, Elephant Control and Natural Parks* (Livingstone: Government Printers, 1934), p. 388.

18. Interview with Kashiba Elders (15 April 1975).

19. J. W. Gregory, *The Great Rift Valley* (Frank Cass, 1968), p. 227.

20. C. H. Pope, *The Reptile World* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1964), p. 33.

21. Gibbons, *Africa*, Vol. 1, p. 151; Campbell, 'Stories', p. 56.

22. John Roscoe, *Twenty Five Years in East Africa* (New York: Negro Publishing Press, 1969), p. 155.

and religious powers.²³ Persons belonging to these clans were, by a generally accepted convention, not allowed to hunt or kill crocodiles. It was also believed that clan members could not be caught by a crocodile because they were related.

Among a number of societies, such as the Turkana of northern Kenya, and the Lozi of Zambia, the Lele of Zaire, the Hausa of Nigeria and a number of peoples in Ghana, the crocodile was hunted for food.²⁴ In some areas, parts of the crocodile were used for medicinal purposes;²⁵ in others, the crocodile's tough armour-like skin was used for making shields and helmets for soldiers, and the teeth and scutes were turned into ornaments and charms.²⁶

Colonial period

Shortly before and after the establishment of colonial rule in Africa, several European travellers visited parts of Africa, missionaries established mission stations, traders opened trading stations and administrators built administrative stations to open up the country and consolidate their administration of the colonies under their control. Many wrote long commentaries on the crocodile. Nearly all expressed surprise at the presence of large populations of crocodiles in the Shire, Limpopo, Kwanza, Luapula, Blue and White Nile, Zambezi and other smaller rivers, and in Lakes Victoria, Bangweulu, Tana, Mweru and Nyasa (now Malawi). (It is interesting that Lake Kivu, probably because of its depth and the presence of gases under the water, does not provide a good habitat for crocodiles.) These populations were variously described as 'dense', 'abundant', 'crowds', 'numerous', and 'chock-full'.²⁷ Because of its man-eating activities, many described the crocodile as a 'brute', 'hideous', 'loathsome', 'abhorrent', 'disgusting and ungentlemanly creature' to name a few.²⁸ Many were bent and intent on the destruction of the crocodile. H. L. Duff, employed by the Nyasaland Administration in the early 1900s, believed that the crocodiles were 'to be shot whenever and wherever they were seen'.

23. Eileen Bigland, *The Lake of Royal Crocodiles* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1939); Andrew Roberts, *A History of the Bemba* (Longman, 1973).

24. Pope, *The Reptiles*, p. 33; A. J. Venning, 'A Crocodile incident', *Northern Rhodesian Journal* (1953), p. 73; Mary Douglas, 'The Lele of Kasai', in Daryll Forde (ed.), *African Worlds* (Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 10; Cott and Pooley, *Status*, p. 27.

25. In the Bangweulu area, the crocodile's gall bladder was mixed with water and taken as medicine for stomach pains. J. E. Hughes, *Eighteen Years in Lake Bangweulu* (Field, 1933), p. 315. It is also known that the crocodile's bile and brain are very fatal if taken in concentrated form.

26. Pope, *Reptiles*, p. 33.

27. W. Freshwater, 'A Christmas Journey in Heathen Land', *Chronicle of the London Missionary Society* (1903), p. 216; Chairles Lemaire, *Mission Scientifique en Katonga* (Brussels: Tervuren, 1911), p. 311; Theo Kassner, *From Rhodesia to Egypt on Foot* (Hutchinson, 1911), p. 27.

28. Campbell, *In the Heart*, p. 288; Guggisberg, *Crocodiles*, p. 141; Chalmers, *Sport*, p. 58; Maugham, *Portuguese East Africa*, p. 50.

Maugham felt that it was 'nothing short' of his duty 'to mercilessly destroy [every crocodile] which gave him the opportunity'; Dugald Campbell, a missionary on the lower Luapula, never considered a 'cartridge shot at them wasted'; Muirhead, a self confessed poacher proudly claimed that, in shooting crocodiles, he was not 'robbing Africa of something that will never return but ridding it of a pest'; W. S. Chadwick reported that he never lost 'a chance to shoot [crocodiles]';²⁹ while Holmes, Barns and Gregory found shooting crocodiles a very 'good past-time'.³⁰ Pitman, the Chief Game Warden, regarded the crocodile as a 'foul beast' and for 17 years encouraged its extermination.³¹ In the eyes of many Europeans, the crocodile stood condemned and had to be eradicated from the African rivers at all costs.³²

The desire to eradicate crocodiles became even more strong with the development of commercial fishing to feed emerging urban industrial centres. The first country where wholesale extermination of crocodiles was sanctioned was in the Belgian Congo (now Zaire). Here the Belgians found a thriving indigenous fishing industry along the river Zaire which later fed the towns of Leopoldville (Kinshasa) and Brazzaville. To encourage the industry, thousands of crocodiles were exterminated to make it safe for fishermen.³³ In 1911, Louis Steppers, a fisheries expert with the Belgian Colonial Museum at Tervuren, recommended, after a visit to the lower Luapula River and Lake Mweru, that the administration of Katanga should declare 'war' on the crocodiles which he called 'useless animals' to make the fishery safe and 'promote the fishing industry'.³⁴ And in Uganda, Eric von Hippel warned the Uganda Government that 'crocodiles must be tackled with the utmost determination or else commercial fishing by any method whatsoever would remain impossible'.³⁵ In response to these and other appeals, wholesale extermination of crocodiles was sanctioned by the colonial governments in Africa. Bounties were offered by governments for crocodile heads and eggs. The response was tremendous. Fishermen wishing to increase their earnings turned to crocodile hunting. Some used firearms, traps, concealed directives, hooks and poisoned baits or spears. Thousands of crocodiles were killed and their eggs destroyed, resulting in a

29. Duff, *Nyasaland*, p. 932; Maugham, *Portuguese East Africa*, p. 52; Campbell, *In the Heart*, p. 288; T. Muirhead, *Ivory Poaching and Cannibals in Africa* (Methuen, 1933), p. 128; W. S. Chadwick, *Man-killers and Marauders* (H. F. G. Witherby, 1929), p. 206.

30. F. Racliffe Holmes, *In the Wildest Africa* (S. Martin, 1936), p. 27; T. Alexander Barns, *Across the Great Craterland to the Congo* (Methuen, 1922), p. 253; Gregory, *Rift Valley*, p. 126.

31. Quoted from Graham and Beard, *Eyelids*, p. 68.

32. Maugham, *Africa*, Vol. I, pp. 95-9; A. S. H. Gibbons, *Exploration and Hunting in Central Africa* (Methuen, 1898), p. 195.

33. Alfred Goffin, *Les Pêcheries et les Poissons au Congo* (Brussels: Tervuren, 1909); Jan Vansina, *The Tio Kingdom of the Middle Congo 1880-1892* (Oxford University Press), pp. 136-7.

34. Louis Stapper, 'Le Luapula aux environs de Kasenga: expériences de pêche fautes au Lac Moëro', *La Revue Congolais*, 1 (1912), pp. 395-403.

35. Quoted in Graham and Beard, *Eyelids*, p. 21.

very sharp decline of crocodile population in many waterways.³⁶ On Lake Kioga, in southern Uganda, a company engaged in commercial fishing engaged a professional hunter specifically to exterminate crocodiles so that fishing could be improved.³⁷ It resulted in thousands of crocodiles being killed.

The demand for crocodile belly skins for making shoes, handbags, belts and purses contributed significantly to the sharp decline in the population of crocodiles in the African waterways. Professional hunters, with trained crews using very powerful firearms, killed thousands of crocodiles in African rivers and lakes.³⁸ One hunter operating on the shores of Lake Rukwa in southern Tanzania claimed in 1954 to have killed 45,000 crocodiles in that year alone. Another operating in Botswana accounted for 40,000 crocodiles during his hunting career. In Tchad, one dealer handled 21,159 skins between 1966 and 1970. Hunters operating along the shores of Lakes Victoria, Nyanza and Kioga accounted for 13,000 crocodiles killed per year between 1950 and 1960. And in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) over 5,000 crocodiles were killed by one hunter in the first six months of 1954.³⁹ Thousands more were killed by hunters in other parts of Africa.

The destruction of crocodiles for their skins became a source of considerable revenue for a number of African countries in the form of hunting licences, fees and customs charges. Crocodile skins also formed an important export item bringing in a considerable amount of income for the countries concerned. For example, between 1965 and 1971, Ethiopia exported 26,045 skins; Senegal exported 153,697 skins between 1957 and 1969; between 1950 and 1965, the Malagasy Republic exported 399,519 kilogrammes (almost 400 tonnes) of crocodile skins valued at about 14,000,000 Malagasy francs; Uganda exported 108,000 skins valued at about £800,000 while Tanganyika exported £1,000,000 worth of skins.⁴⁰ Other countries like Sudan, Kenya, Bechuanaland (Botswana), Mozambique, Angola, the Belgian Congo (Zaire) and Nyasaland (Malawi) exported a substantial amount of skins for which no precise records are available. And in the case of Angola, decimation of crocodiles was also encouraged by the

36. A. Loveridge, 'The Crocodiles of Tanganyika Territory', *Tanganyika Notes and Records*, 10 (1940), p. 45; Marvel, *Congo*, p. 363; Lawrence G. Green, *Secret Africa* (Collins, 1953), p. 245; National Archives of Zambia (NAZ) ZA1/9/163/3; Native Affairs Circular Number 17 of 1925; Secretary for Native Affairs to Chief Secretary, Livingstone, 1 September 1933; Cott and Pooley, *Status*, p. 73; Marvel, *The New Congo*, p. 249.

37. Graham and Bear, *Eyelids*, p. 21.

38. A number of crocodile hunters and traders in crocodile skins have left glowing accounts of their exploits. See Earl Lawrence, *Crocodile Fever: a true story of adventure* (Collins, 1954); W. L. Speight, 'Hunting Crocodiles', *Empire Review*, 63 (1936), pp. 176-6; Roy Macauley, *Crocodile Trader* (Jarrolds, 1960).

39. Office of the District Fisheries Officer, Nchelenge, Zambia: VER/1: J. Neuwooldt, Lusaka, to Director of Game and Tsetse Control, Chilanga, 6 August 1954; Cott, 'Inquiry', p. 323; Cott and Pooley, *Status*, pp. 18, 36, 45, 62, 74.

40. Cott and Pooley, *Status*, pp. 18, 36, 45, 74; Cott, 'Inquiry', p. 323.

presence of alluvial diamond mining along many of the rivers. According to Chadwick, many prospectors and miners systematically shot crocodiles in their areas of operations to ensure the safety of their workers. Often, some miners and prospectors examined the stomach contents with a hope of finding a diamond stone among the pebbles which crocodiles swallow to ensure their stability in the water.⁴¹ All these efforts combined to reduce the population of crocodiles in many waterways. In some, like the Kwanza, they became almost extinct.

The decline in crocodile populations has also been affected by less direct action, most obviously by the building of man-made dams on rivers, which initially destroy breeding grounds. It takes at least a year before new ones are found and developed. Thus, in many places and in many ways, the Europeans have contributed greatly to the reduction of the crocodile population in tropical Africa.

Men-Crocodiles

Although the offer of bounties and the commercial hunting of crocodiles has succeeded in reducing the crocodile population, in many waterways insecurity still remains. What has happened in some places is that the menace of natural crocodiles has now been replaced by that of men-crocodiles. Men-crocodiles are not a new phenomenon. Like the werewolf in North America, they have existed from time immemorial.⁴² In North-East Zambia, two administrative officials reported in 1911 that 'under certain exceptional circumstances, men are believed to turn into crocodiles'.⁴³ In 1900, Bentley reported that in areas 'where crocodiles are common, the witches are believed to turn into crocodiles or enter and actuate them . . . to cause their victim's death by catching him'.⁴⁴ And on the lower Luapula, Dugald Campbell reported a belief in 'crocodile doctors who are said to use crocodiles to destroy personal enemies or enemies of those who employ them'.⁴⁵ And from Lake Victoria, H. M. Stanley reported that the Chief of Ukereme Islands had absolute control over a crocodile which he once used to abduct a beautiful girl he admired.⁴⁶

In areas where the men-crocodiles become a menace, the people have three options. The first is to seek protective medicine for the village or

41. Chadwick, 'Man-killers', p. 208.

42. This phenomenon bears resemblance to man-lions common among forest peoples and to werewolves in European cultures; see A. Vain Malderen, 'Crimes et Superstition Indigènes: la sect visanguka—hommes-lions', *Bulletin des Jurisdictions et Droit Congolais* (1935), pp. 22-4; Lopez, *Wolves*, pp. 123-4, 227-33.

43. Cullen Gouldsbury and Hubert Sheane, *The Great Plateau of Northern Rhodesia* (Edward Arnold, 1911), p. 201.

44. Bentley, *Pioneering*, pp. 154; See also Johnston, *George Greenfell*, pp. 494-5.

45. Campbell, *In the Heat*, 228; for Bulozzi see Campbell 'Stories', p. 55.

46. Henry M. Stanley, *Through the Dark Continent* (Sampson, Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1890), p. 162.

chief's area. Here people are expected to observe taboos in order to maintain the potency of the medicine.⁴⁷ If this does not work, they invite a witch-finder to neutralize the medicines owned by men-crocodiles or those with control over crocodiles. He is also asked to 'catch' the 'guilty' persons who are promptly expelled from the village or chief's area.⁴⁸ If this fails, the last option is to turn to the government with a request to provide a hunter or hunters to crop the crocodiles in the area.⁴⁹ It is hoped that in this exercise, men-crocodiles or crocodiles controlled by evil men would be destroyed.⁵⁰

Ecological consequences

In carrying out the extermination of crocodiles, no consideration whatsoever was given to the ecological functions of the crocodile or to the ecological consequences which would follow after the massive destruction. Neither biologists, nor herpetologists nor ecologists were consulted to find the best way of cropping nor were they invited to accompany the cropping team or to study the cropped area to ascertain the effects. C. A. W. Guggisberg has lamented that 'by over-killing the crocodiles, man in his great wisdom has upset the ecosystem of the African lakes and rivers and is beginning to pay the price'.⁵¹ The price has been largely ecological and has affected man in several ways.

In fisheries where crocodiles have been exterminated, it has been observed that there has been an increase in the populations of otters and mongoose, which, apart from eating quantities of fish, do also extensive damage to fishing nets. This reduces the catch and subsequently the income for fishermen while at the same time increasing repair and replacement costs. It has also been noticed that there is a sharp increase in crabs, which not only destroy fish eggs, but also eat the small fingerlings, thus reducing the fish stocks, particularly of commercial species.

The elimination of crocodiles has affected man from a health angle. In East Africa, entomologists have observed that the massive destruction of crocodiles has robbed the riverine tsetse fly of a source of blood. As a result, the fly is more ready than before to attack human beings, thus increasing the risk of spreading sleeping sickness. This, to a large extent, has revealed that the tsetse fly has a stronger preference for crocodile than human blood.⁵² In Sri Lanka, it was observed that, with the extermination

47. Interview with Headman Kapena (14 September 1979).

48. Ian Gunnison, *Luapula Peoples of Northern Rhodesia* (Manchester University Press, 1958), p. 27.

49. See for example the case of Luapula Valley in North East Zambia, reported in the *Zambia Daily Mail*, 9 February 1984.

50. *Zambia Daily Mail and Times of Zambia*, 7 January 1983.

51. Guggisberg, *Crocodiles*, p. 98.

52. Cott and Pooley, *Status*, p. 15; Cott, 'The Status of the Nile Crocodile in Uganda', *Uganda Journal*, 1 (1954), pp. 1-12.

of the crocodile, there was an immediate increase in a population of predator fish species which preyed on insectivorous species which ate mosquito eggs and larvae and helped to reduce not only the mosquito population but also the incidence of malaria as well. With the reduction of this species, the number of malaria cases increased among the riverine population. Although no research has been conducted on this aspect in an African environment, the result may be more or less the same.⁵³

Herpetologists and conservationists have, for many years, appealed to governments to introduce measures to protect the crocodile from extermination. These appeals are now being responded to. Nearly all African governments have now placed the crocodile on the list of endangered species. It now requires a licence to hunt a crocodile.⁵⁴ African governments are now aware that the crocodile is able to attract tourists from abroad who want to see it in its natural habitat rather than in Zoos and parks. In so doing, it enables a country to earn foreign exchange without necessarily exporting its skin.⁵⁵

As a result of research, governments have now come to understand the role of crocodiles a little better. For example, it is now known that, apart from eating predator fish species like barbel (*Clarias*) and Tiger fish (*Hydrocyon vittatus*) which prey on commercially important species such as Cichlids,⁵⁶ it also eats deadly snakes such as puff adders, black mambas and cobras as well as mongoose and otters which eat a lot of fish and do extensive damage to nets. It also eats dead, putrid and rotting fish, dead animals and snakes, and so performs the job of a scavenger and cleans the water in the waterways.⁵⁷ It has also been found that the accusation that it eats 'vast quantities of fish' is not true. In 1912, Steven Hamilton, a South African Game Ranger who, in the course of his work, had examined hundreds of crocodiles killed in South African rivers and found most of the stomachs empty except for a few pebbles, concluded that it did not eat as much fish as was then believed. His conclusion was also confirmed by C. R. S. Pitman after examining hundreds of crocodiles killed along the White Nile. He later confessed that 'stomach examination . . . furnished little evidence to prove that the crocodile is very destructive to fish life'. He only found scanty remains of molluscs, crustaceans and a few fish. A number of years later, Hippel, Cott, Graham

53. C. Hoare, 'Studies on Trypanosoma Gray: the life cycle in the testse fly and in the crocodile', *Parasitology*, 23 (1931), pp. 449-84; C. Hoare, 'On protozoa blood parasites collected in Uganda with an account of the life cycle of the Crocodile haemogregarine', *Parasitology*, 24 (1932), pp. 210-24.

54. Cott and Pooley, *Status, passim*.

55. H. B. Cott, 'Tourists and Crocodiles in Uganda', *Oryx*, 10 (1969), pp. 153-60; R. H. Bustard, 'A Future for Crocodiles', *Oryx*, 10 (1969).

56. Cott, 'Inquiry', pp. 252-302; E. Hippel, 'Stomach Contents of Crocodiles', *Uganda Journal*, 10 (1946), pp. 148-9; Graham and Beard, *Eyelids*, pp. 142-4.

57. Hughes, *Eighteen Years*, p. 315.

and Beard found the same results.⁵⁸ Cott for example concluded that the 'overall daily fish consumption of an individual crocodile is less than that of a white breasted cormorant (which consumes at least one kilogram of fish per day)'.⁵⁹ Governments now realize that, far from being merely destructive, the crocodile is an ecological asset.

In a number of countries, principally Zambia and Zimbabwe, governments are now encouraging crocodile farming to provide skins for export. Farmers are obliged to return a certain percentage to the wild to help maintain the ecological balance in the waterways.⁶⁰

Conclusion

The task of this article has been to highlight the status and fate of the Nile Crocodile in the African waterways. I have shown that as a result of the 'hate-the crocodile' campaign that was fanned by European traders, travellers, administrators and missionaries, the crocodile was condemned as an 'unmitigated pest' or vermin which had to be destroyed at all costs wherever and whenever it was found. Its destruction has been accelerated to a large extent by economic considerations: to promote commercial fishing and, in the case of Angola, alluvial mining of diamonds as well. Others destroyed crocodiles either for sport or to vent their dislike for the crocodile. This destruction has brought the crocodile to the brink of extinction in many African waterways. The ecological consequences arising from the massive destruction of crocodiles have only been partially understood. Commercial fish stocks are reduced and incidences of malaria and sleeping sickness are on the increase in a number of areas.

The crocodile, like the Rhinoceros and the Elephant in African game reserves which are being poached for the horn and ivory, and the wolf in North America which is being destroyed to protect ranches, is now an endangered species. Where conservation laws have been implemented to protect it, and where facilities are provided, it has become a tourist attraction. From the discussion above, it is clear that, far from being just a useless creature, the crocodile can be both an ecological and an economic asset in the African waterways.

58. Guggisberg, *Crocodile*, p. 96, Hippel, 'Stomach Contents', p. 148; Pitman, 'Crocodile', p. 106; Graham and Beard, *Eyelids*.

59. Quoted in Guggisberg, *Crocodiles*, p. 96.

60. A. C. Pooley, 'Some observations on Rearing Crocodiles', *The Lemmergeyer*, 10 (1969), pp. 45-9; J. Rutledge, 'Crocodile Farm', *Black Lechwe*, 7 (1969), pp. 23-4.

ISSUES IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL DESIGN OF A THIRD NIGERIAN REPUBLIC

LARRY DIAMOND

(Editors' note: The political future of Nigeria, by some way the most populous state in the African continent, is a matter of concern to all those interested in the future well-being of Africa. In this article, Larry Diamond looks to the future through the eyes of a political scientist interested in the role of constitutions generally as well as Nigeria's past politics in particular. It is intended as the start of an academic debate on the role of constitutions and their relationships to social and economic factors in contemporary Africa. The editors would be happy to receive comments, whether of a general theoretical nature or of specific relevance to Nigeria; but they will not consider for publication any contribution longer than 2,000 words).

REFLECTIVE OF its deep commitment to political freedom and popular, accountable government, Nigeria has recently been engaged in a vigorous and wide-ranging national debate on its constitutional future. The search for a fresh design for democracy in Nigeria comes less than three years after the overthrow of the failed Second Republic. If a third attempt at democratic government is to be successful, however, it must tailor democratic institutions to fit Nigeria's unique heritage and to overcome the structural problems that have defeated democratic government in the past. As it was in the Second Republic, so it must be a premise of a Third Republic that 'institutional architecture is a key to democratic viability'.¹

The focus in this article on constitutional structure should not be taken to suggest that a wisely tailored constitution can assure future democratic success in Nigeria. As has been argued elsewhere, the immense premium on political power must be diminished if the contest for power is not to become again a desperate, fraudulent, and violent struggle.² State control over economic resources and rewards must be reduced. Opportunities need to be generated for individuals to establish careers, accumulate wealth and raise their social status outside of the state, through private initiative. Growing recognition of these imperatives heightens the pressure for privatization in Nigeria today. Similarly, the strong residue of support for the Buhari-Idiagbon 'War Against Indiscipline' reflects not an admiration of

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1. C. S. Whitaker, Jr., 'Second Beginnings: the new political framework', *Issue*, 11 (1981), p. 2.

2. Claude Ake, 'Presidential Address to the 1981 Conference of the Nigerian Political Science Association', *West Africa*, 25 May 1981, pp. 1162-3; and Larry Diamond, 'Nigeria in Search of Democracy', *Foreign Affairs*, 62 (1984), pp. 905-27.

the unprecedented authoritarianism of that discredited military regime, but rather a widespread sense that the construction of a democratic and decent society in Nigeria will require a transformation of values and behavioural orientations. Among the obvious requirements here are greater political tolerance and a sense of civic responsibility. Still, changes in economic structure and political values will take years to effect and perhaps a generation or more fully to take root. Nevertheless institutional innovations seem imperative if there is to be any real change soon in the way the democratic game is played in Nigeria.

While space does not permit even a brief review of the causes of previous democratic failures in Nigeria, one may safely assert that these have heavily involved, in various ways, the abuse of power and desecration of the rules of the democratic game.³ A central purpose of constitutional design must therefore be to check, balance, and decentralize political power as extensively and innovatively as possible, and hence to reduce both the stakes in any electoral contest and the scope for behavioural abuses. Constitutional engineering should focus on this basic problem and not be misled into presuming either that everything about the Second Republic was misconceived or that *any* innovation must therefore represent improvement in the democratic prospect for Nigeria.

Federalism

A fundamental challenge to democracy in Nigeria, or any other country with such deep and volatile ethnic divisions, is to find means for managing, containing and reducing ethnic conflict. The polarization of ethnic and regional conflict was a leading factor in the collapse of Nigeria's First Republic and a central concern in the design of the Second Republic. In the bitterness and disappointment over the failure of the Second Republic, there has not been adequate appreciation of the considerable progress achieved by the federal structure, as it has been evolving since 1966. The 19-state federal system and the federalist provisions in the 1979 Constitution functioned reasonably (even remarkably) well to break up the hegemony of Nigeria's largest ethnic groups, decentralize ethnic conflict, disperse development activity, foster cross-cutting cleavages, expose intra-ethnic divisions, facilitate inter-ethnic alliances, and in general contain the power-

3. On the failure of the First Republic, see John P. Mackintosh, *Nigerian Government and Politics* (Allen and Unwin, 1966); K. W. J. Post and Michael Vickers, *Structure and Conflict in Nigeria 1960-66* (Heinemann, 1973); Richard L. Sklar, 'Contradictions in the Nigerian Political System', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 3 (1965), pp. 201-13; and Larry Diamond, *Class, Ethnicity and Democracy in Nigeria: the failure of the First Republic* (Macmillan, forthcoming). On the decay and collapse of the Second Republic, see Larry Diamond, 'Nigeria in Search of Democracy' and 'Cleavage, Conflict and Anxiety in the Second Nigerian Republic', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 20 (1982), pp. 629-68; and Richard Joseph, 'Class, State and Prebendal Politics', *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 21 (1983), pp. 21-38, and 'The Overthrow of Nigeria's Second Republic', *Current History*, 83 (March 1984), pp. 121-4, 138.

ful centrifugal forces inherent in Nigeria's ethnic composition.⁴ Debate will (and should) persist over the proper balance of power and authority between federal, state and local government. This type of continuing adjustment and adaptation is necessary and inevitable in any federal system, including that of the United States.

But it is mistaken to think that, because the creation of 19 states succeeded in decentralizing power and distributing resources to some degree, these goals could be further advanced by doubling or tripling the number of states, as would have happened had the politicians given in to all the demands for new states during the Second Republic. Certainly anomalies exist in the structure and size of states; some are much larger, more populous and more ethnically heterogeneous than others. This may suggest the logic of breaking up a few of the largest and most deeply divided states to give the overall system a better population and ethnic balance. But wholesale state creation would probably not further decentralize power. On the contrary, the greater the number of states, the weaker and less viable individual states will become, with the direct consequence that the centre would actually gather *more* powers and initiative. Neither would the creation of many new states necessarily transfer resources more effectively from the centre to the periphery of the system. The doubling or tripling in the number of state governments and administrations (which was a major attraction for the political elites who led the movements for new states) would leave for distribution even fewer resources for genuine development. In Nigeria's current financial circumstances, such an expansion in the number of states would probably recreate the Second Republic's pathetic spectacle of teachers and civil servants around the country waiting months for their state governments to pay their salaries.

It is equally mistaken to imagine, as have a few prominent Nigerians publicly and many more privately, that a confederal system will solve the continuing problems of ethnic tension, distrust, and inequality. Aside from the fact that this would seem to many Nigerians to render tragically pointless the massive loss of life in a civil war that was believed at the time to have settled this question, the competition for limited resources would hardly disappear in a looser confederation. In fact, because the more autonomous units of a confederal system would probably have to be much larger than the current states (even if there were quasi-autonomous states within them), such an arrangement would tend to plunge Nigeria back to the days of the regional system of the First Republic; then ethnic conflict became a tripolar struggle between Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo (later reducing to a bipolar, North-South confrontation) and the interests of the country's ethnic minorities (almost half the population) got shortchanged.

4. Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (University of California Press, 1985), pp. 604-13; Diamond, 'Nigeria in Search of Democracy', p. 921.

Because ethnic identities are multiple and fluid, shifting up or down in scale depending on the political context, the problems of ethnic conflict in developing countries are rarely solved by changing the composition of the nation.⁵ The challenge is to find institutional means to enable ethnic groups to live with one another in some degree of equity and mutual security. In this regard, the Second Republic made progress not only in its federalist distribution of power and resources between the three levels of government, but also in its imaginative provisions to distribute power and resources equitably among the major ethnic groups and to develop political institutions that cut across the major ethnic divisions. These should be preserved. For example, the requirement that presidential appointments 'shall have regard to the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity'⁶ has become a cornerstone of ethnic justice and fair government in Nigeria and should be retained in the next constitution. Similarly, if there are to be political parties (and I believe they are indispensable in a large-scale democracy as I shall argue later) these should again be required, first, to have a broad base of organization in at least two-thirds (perhaps even three-quarters) of the states, and second, to eschew ethnic, regional and religious mottos, emblems and allusions.⁷

Despite the many forms of erosion of democratic faith and vitality during the Second Republic, the system did register continuing progress in the development of broad-based, ethnically heterogeneous parties with real strength in diverse regions of the country.⁸ Horowitz,⁹ I believe, underestimates the progress toward cross-ethnic alliances and heterogeneous parties in the Second Republic, especially in the last year or two, before and during the 1983 election campaign. Nevertheless, his observations on the conflicting incentives for party consolidation and breadth in the Nigerian electoral system merit close attention. The proliferation of states and the first-past-the-post method for electing national legislators, from single-member districts, exerted countervailing pressures against the consolidation of the party system into just two or three broad, trans-ethnic parties. The number of states will not be reduced in a Third Republic, nor is the single-member district model (with its closer identity between legislators and geographical communities) likely to be abandoned. But two alternatives mentioned by Horowitz might increase the incentives for multi-ethnic appeal and organization by the parties. One would be to raise the threshold requirement for direct election of the President on the first ballot, so that the

5. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*.

6. *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979*, (Lagos), Section 157, p. 51. The President was also explicitly required to appoint 'at least one minister from each state, who shall be an indigene of such State' (Section 135, p. 45).

7. *1979 Constitution*, Sections 202 and 203, p. 65.

8. Whitaker, 'Second Beginnings', pp. 10-12; Larry Diamond, 'Cleavage, Conflict and Anxiety in the Second Nigerian Republic', pp. 652-68.

9. Horowitz, *Ethnic Group in Conflicts*, pp. 635-8.

victor would need, in addition to 25 per cent of the vote in at least two-thirds of the states, something more than a simple plurality of the total vote, say, for example, 40 per cent. Alternatively, a majority vote could be required, and a preferential or alternative vote system adopted, like that in Sri Lanka, in which voters would be required to rank their preferences among the candidates, so that the votes for losing candidates would be distributed among the higher finishers until one received a majority. This has the virtue of requiring interparty agreements in advance of the voting, and so encouraging 'a politics of bargaining and moderation', but it would be very difficult to conduct among an electorate of such limited literacy, where voting is done by thumbprinting beside a party symbol. It would also complicate the task of counting the ballots by hand at the polls, which is an important check upon electoral fraud in Nigeria. Nevertheless, if the sorts of provisions to which I have referred are retained, this progress toward a truly national party system is likely to continue in a Third Republic and to be a major foundation of its health.

Zoning: the quest for ethnic balance

If distribution and rotation of power among Nigeria's ethnic and regional groups is now an article of faith and a foundation of political stability, more thought must be given to how this can be prescribed and achieved. The current assumption that reflecting the federal character requires the representation of every state (or virtually every state) in federal bodies and batches of federal appointments is often cumbersome and unwieldy. This is especially the case where only a few people need to be appointed, or where it may be difficult to find persons of suitable professional training and experience from every state. Under such circumstances, there is a more general principle of distribution that has been implicit in political dialogue for a long time, and that was explicitly incorporated into the regulations for rotation of the Presidential nomination and other important offices of the most broad-based party in the Second Republic, the ruling National Party of Nigeria (NPN). This is the principle of zoning. It maintains that Nigeria's many states and ethnic groups can reasonably be aggregated into a smaller number of zones, roughly equal in their population size and number of states and reflecting more general divisions in the country. Distribution and rotation of power among these zones can ensure some ethnic balance even when it is unreasonable or impossible to mandate the representation of every state.¹⁰

A reasonable method for constructing such zones (not so different than how the NPN went about it) would first divide the country into an equal

10. In an intriguing and controversial contribution to the current debate on Nigeria's constitutional future, Lt.-General T. Y. Danjuma (rtd.), has proposed that the presidency itself be rotated among five ethnic groups or zones: the Hausa-Fulani, Igbo, Yoruba, Northern minorities, and Southern minorities. This zonal scheme differs from that outlined below primarily in providing for only two northern zones rather than three, (*West Africa*, 8 September 1986, pp. 1875-6).

number of zones between north and south; let us say (as did the NPN) three each. Then, natural groupings could be sought within those divisions. In the south this is quite easy: there are four Yoruba states (Lagos, Ogun, Ondo and Oyo), two Igbo (Imo and Anambra), and three minority (Bendel, Rivers and Cross River). Moreover, these three zones probably would not vary too widely in their total population.¹¹ Similarly, the ethnic minority states of the 'middle belt' in the north form a natural grouping (Kwara, Niger, Benue and Plateau and perhaps Gongola). It is less clear how the states of the predominantly Muslim far north would be grouped, but, given the fact that Kano is by far the most populous state in the federation and Kano and Kaduna the most industrialized in the north, it might make sense to group these two together, leaving Sokoto, Bauchi, and Borno (the less developed states of the far north) as a sixth zone.¹²

Clearly, there are anomalies and problems with the above arrangement (as there would be with any other). The effort to devise an equitable zoning arrangement may pinpoint problems in the federal structure that may call for attention if any further states are to be created, but it may also help to assure those seeking new states of a fair share, even within the current arrangement. If, for example, the two Igbo states are made to constitute a single zone, equivalent to the four Yoruba states (especially since the two ethnic groups are fairly close in total population), and if Kano and Kaduna alone were to constitute a zone, the pressures in these four states for the creation of new states might dissipate significantly.

However it is structured, such a zoning system, codified in the constitution, would provide more flexibility in fulfilling the goal of ethnic balance and justice and so help to reconcile the demands of governmental efficiency and high professional standards, on the one hand, with those for ethnic harmony and fairness on the other.¹³ At the same time, the preservation of the states as genuinely significant political units with real administrative authority and development powers, would keep the zones from descending into just another synonym for 'regions'.

Decentralization

The search for a more effective federal system as a cornerstone of stable democracy in Nigeria should give high priority to strengthening the level at which democracy has historically evolved and operated in Nigeria: local

11. Their estimated 1983 populations (projecting from the official 1979 statistics) would be something like 19.4 million, 13.3 million, and 13.1 million respectively, although the official figures must be taken with many grains of salt. Larry Diamond, 'Free and Fair? The Administration and Conduct of the 1983 Nigerian Elections' (Paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association (USA), Boston, December 1983, Table 1).

12. This northern breakdown has not only a certain political logic but also a relatively even population balance between the three zones, with the 1983 estimates being 17.1 million for the five minority states, 16.9 million for Kano and Kaduna and 17.1 million for Bauchi, Borno and Sokoto.

13. On the trade-offs and options in structuring preferential and distributional provisions, see Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in conflict*, pp. 656-7.

government. Not only is local government a vital arena of initiative and action in a truly federal system, it can also be a school for the development of citizen awareness and political skills. A strong system of local government can mobilize people into the political process because it is the level of government to which ordinary people, especially those with little or no education, can most easily relate. And in a truly federal system, it is also the level that most immediately affects ordinary people's lives.

Thought must therefore be devoted to establishing appropriate electoral structures for governments in the Local Government Areas. In addition to some kind of executive office, perhaps there should be an elected assembly, even a very large one, that would be paid only very modestly and would meet only part-time, but would have as one of its purposes the development of democracy at the grass roots. Such local assemblies, particularly if they were accompanied by informal gatherings in towns and villages to discuss major issues, would parallel in some ways the communal assembly which has been a crucial building block of democracy in many of Nigeria's traditional political systems. Consideration might also be given to the division of powers between federal, state and local government. Are there functions and responsibilities that can be transferred at least partially to local governments? Perhaps schools and community development projects would be two such areas. In an era of drastically reduced federal resources, communities must expect to bear more of the responsibility for their own finance as the price of greater political autonomy and power.

Checks and balances

As indicated above, the basic, generic problem of democracy in Nigeria has been the abuse of its powers and the corruption of its processes for the benefit of private individuals and their friends and clients. In other words, the system has lacked accountability, both to the citizenry and to the premises of the system itself.¹⁴ In each of the two Republics, democracy was disfigured and robbed of legitimacy by massive and grave electoral fraud.¹⁵ In each instance, the system was further delegitimized by widespread political corruption, which reached truly devastating proportions in the Second Republic.¹⁶ The adverse consequences of corrupt accumu-

14. I am grateful to Naomi Chazan for suggesting this formulation.

15. On the elections of the First Republic, see Mackintosh, *Nigerian Government and Politics*, and Post and Vickers, *Structure and Conflict in Nigeria*, pp. 161-85 and 219-32. On the rigging of the 1983 elections, see Diamond, 'Free and Fair?'. The Controversy that tarnished the legitimacy of the 1979 Presidential election is discussed in Billy Dudley, *An Introduction to Nigerian Government and Politics*, (Indiana University Press, 1982), pp. 168-78; Richard A. Joseph, 'Democratization Under Military Tutelage: crisis and consensus in the Nigerian 1979 Elections', *Comparative Politics*, 14 (1981), pp. 80-8; and Whitaker, 'Second Beginnings', p. 13, fn. 1.

16. Sayre P. Schatz, *Nigerian Capitalism*, (University of California Press, 1977), pp. 190-5, 208-9, 231-2, 244-5; Larry Diamond, 'Nigeria in Search of Democracy', pp. 905-10, and 'The Political Economy of Corruption in Nigeria' (paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association (USA), Los Angeles, October 1984).

lation in office have been especially diffuse. Not only does it give rise to extraordinary concentrations of wealth and displays of affluence, which come bitterly to be resented, but it destroys the efficiency and saps the resources of government, thus eclipsing much progress in socioeconomic development. It further destroys the incentive structure of society, preempting productive entrepreneurial activity and intensifying the determination to get and keep political power at any cost.¹⁷

While not diminishing the central role of values and social structure in these problems, the failure of accountability implicates, inescapably, the political institutions. Electoral administration at all levels has typically been highly permeable to partisan manipulation. Similarly, the judiciary, while blessed with some capable and courageous judges, has lacked vigour and independence and hence has often bowed to political pressures. Ruling parties have tended to use the police, especially at election time, as their political security force. In the First Republic, ethnic parties made the census a part of their struggle for power. The 1979 Constitution established a Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal to monitor, investigate and punish corruption in office, but it made its members' appointment, supervision and funding dependent on the very politicians whom they were supposed to regulate. Not surprisingly, these two bodies never functioned as intended.¹⁸

The repeated degradation and partisan manipulation of these crucial regulatory institutions underscores the need for original and more far-reaching mechanisms to check, balance and distribute power. The Constitution of the Second Republic attempted to ensure the independence of the federal executive bodies overseeing the elections, judiciary, police, census and code of conduct by making the chairman and members of those bodies extremely difficult to remove and by articulating explicit guarantees of operational autonomy. But this was undermined by giving the president the power to appoint these bodies and by making them dependent in some cases on legislative funding and review.¹⁹ As a result, the judicial service commissions, for example, were full of politicians and the judiciary itself was starved of adequate funds.²⁰

The separation of powers between executive, legislative and judicial branches has proved inadequate in Nigeria to ensure the integrity of the democratic process. Hence, what is needed is almost a fourth branch of government, truly autonomous from party politics in its origins, com-

17. Richard A. Joseph, 'Affluence and Underdevelopment: the Nigerian experience', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 16 (1978), pp. 221-39, and 'Class, State and Prebendal Politics', pp. 21-38; Sayre Schatz, 'Economic Effects of Corruption' (paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association (USA), 1969); Diamond, 'Political Economy of Corruption'.

18. Diamond 'Nigeria in Search of Democracy', p. 913.

19. 1979 Constitution, Sections 140-45, pp. 47-8, and Fifth Schedule, Part I, pp. 112-13.

20. Funke Fagbohun, 'The Quality of Justice', *Newswatch* (Lagos), 26 May 1986, p. 22; and Dan Agbese, 'The Courts in the Dock', *Newswatch*, 26 May 1986, p. 18.

position and functioning. Such a new arm of government must have authority to oversee the appointment, funding and operation of crucial procedural institutions. The latter would be defined as 'those institutions that must remain above party conflict and independent of party control if the democratic process is to work'.²¹ In a previous analysis, I proposed five candidates for inclusion:

- The Federal and State Electoral Commissions.
- The Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal.
- The Federal and State Judicial Service Commissions.
- The Police Service Commission.
- The National Population Commission.²²

To this list of regulatory institutions could be added two new ones:

- A network of federal and state ombudsmen.
- A General Accounting Office, like the GAO of the United States Congress, to investigate and assess the efficiency and management of government.

No institution is more in need of independent control in Nigeria than the electoral administration. One useful model of autonomous electoral administration can be found in Costa Rica, where a Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) exercises exclusive responsibility for the organization and administration of elections in a fashion similar to Nigeria's Federal Electoral Commission. However, since its creation in 1949, Costa Rica's TSE has enjoyed powers far more sweeping and an autonomy far more secure than Nigeria's FEDECO. The TSE consists of three magistrates (expanded to five during elections) who are appointed to staggered six-year terms by the Supreme Court of Justice. It not only administers the voter registration, balloting and counting, but is also empowered to investigate charges of political bias by public employees, file criminal charges against persons violating electoral laws, control the police and other security forces during election periods, monitor executive neutrality in campaigns, and allocate the governmental subvention of campaign costs. The extensive authority and autonomy of this electoral tribunal has had much to do with Costa Rica's outstanding record of fairness and honesty in elections, which in turn has been a key foundation of stable democracy in that country.²³

Similarly, an autonomous code of conduct machinery would permit the rigorous monitoring, investigation and punishment of corrupt conduct in office. Like other forms of white collar crime, political corruption can be deterred by exposure and punishment, if such punishment is sufficiently likely, swift and severe. Only with secure tenure in office, fully adequate

21. Diamond, 'Nigeria in Search of Democracy', p. 916.

22. Diamond, 'Nigeria in Search of Democracy', pp. 917–18.

23. John A. Booth, 'Costa Rican Democracy' (paper presented to the Conference on Democracy in Developing Countries, Hoover Institution, Stanford, California, December 1985), pp. 17–19.

staffs and funding, and complete freedom of action—beyond even the most indirect political pressure or influence—can the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal perform their essential mission of vigilance and deterrence.

Independent control over the Judicial Service Commissions would enhance public confidence in the integrity of the judiciary and might help to remove it from the pressure and entanglements of partisan politics. But this step alone is unlikely to be sufficient. Under the 1979 Constitution, Justices of the Supreme Court and the Federal Court of Appeal were appointed by the President 'on the advice of the Federal Judicial Service Commission', subject to approval by a majority of the Senate. Similar procedures applied at the state level for the appointment of High Court Justices.²⁴ In addition, 'the constitution also empowers the other two branches of government to create courts and determine the number of judicial personnel for any particular court as well as the jurisdiction of the courts so created'.²⁵ These provisions did not give the judiciary adequate autonomy from the other two branches of government. It may therefore be necessary to vest in the Federal and State Judicial Service Commissions sole authority for the appointment of appellate-level justices (perhaps requiring certification of their qualifications by the Bar Association) and for the organization and jurisdiction of the court system. In addition, these Commissions should be given responsibility for the funding of the judiciary, which is now 'made to beg for money for its services'.²⁶ Since independence, the judiciary's financial dependence on the other two branches and its inadequate salaries, facilities and staff, have been important causes of its weakness and vulnerability, and hence its difficulty in fulfilling its mission 'as the bulwark of democracy, the last hope of the common man'.²⁷ Like the Federal Electoral Commission, the judiciary also needs its own permanent staff.²⁸

As the hands-on regulators of political campaigns and demonstrations, the impartiality of the police is also vital to the democratic process. As the Police Service Commission appoints and exercises disciplinary control over all police officers, it too should be responsible to an independent authority. As for the census, insulating its administrative body from partisan political oversight and pressure would probably not eliminate fraud—and certainly

24. *1979 Constitution*, Sections 211, 218, and 235. In practice, the executive branch enjoyed the predominant initiative in the appointment of justices (Agbese, 'The Courts in the Dock', p. 19).

25. Agbese, 'The Courts in the Dock', p. 18.

26. Agbese, 'The Courts in the Dock', p. 18.

27. The latter quotation is from Justice C. O. Oputa of the Nigerian Supreme Court (in Agbese, 'The Courts in the Dock', p. 17). For an authoritative and penetrating analysis of the problems of partiality, uneven competence and growing corruption in the Nigerian judiciary, see in its entirety, Agbese, 'The Courts in the Dock', pp. 15–21.

28. Judicial support staff are now responsible to the more politicized Civil Service Commission (Agbese, 'The Courts in the Dock', p. 18). On the need for a larger permanent and professional staff for the Federal Electoral Commission, see below.

not suspicion and controversy. But it might reduce them and at least limit the damage a conflict over the census would wreak upon the democratic system.

The last two functions above would be new ones in Nigeria. While some states began to appoint ombudsmen during the Second Republic, this would seem to be an idea whose time has arrived for the country as a whole. The ombudsman functions effectively in a growing number of countries to protect individual rights, investigate citizen complaints and enhance the accountability, responsiveness and fairness of government.²⁹ Similarly, there might be a role for an independent investigatory and analytical agency to assess the performance of government and weigh the advisability of potential future projects and contracts. Such independent, advance assessments might save the country considerable money by acting as an additional check on corruption, waste and ineptitude in government.

The fundamental question, however, remains: how are these regulatory institutions to be protected from partisan interference and control? If there is to be an independent body to supervise the appointment, funding and operation of these several procedural institutions, how should that body be constituted?

I have suggested elsewhere that the military somehow constitute this special branch of government, while all other political and governmental functions, including the funding and deployment of the military itself, would remain under civilian control.³⁰ Nigerian proposals for 'diarchy' have gone much further, envisioning an extensive sharing of *substantive* authority between military and elected, civilian office-holders.³¹ Recently, such proposals have formed a prominent theme among the submissions to the Political Bureau, appointed by President Babangida in January 1986 to stimulate debate and propose ideas for a new, participatory political system.³² However, there are compelling reasons to argue that proposals for a permanent diarchy are inherently ill conceived and likely to prove counterproductive.

The experience of institutionalized military participation in political life elsewhere in the world, especially in Latin America and Asia, suggests that this is not a promising means to enhance the accountability of democratic government. To give the military as an institution substantive functions in

29. Richard L. Sklar, 'Developmental Democracy' (paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, New Orleans, August 1985), pp. 15-16.

30. Diamond, 'Nigeria in Search of Democracy', pp. 914-19.

31. For the original proposal, see Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Democracy with Military Vigilance* (Nsukka, Nigeria: African Book Company Ltd, 1974). More recent proposals may be found in Arthur Nwankwo *Civilianized Soldiers: army/civilian government for Nigeria* (Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1984) and S. G. Ikoku, *Nigeria's Fourth Coup: options for modern statehood* (Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1985). Reviews and critiques may be found in 'The Diarchy Proposition', *West Africa*, 1 April 1985, 610-11, and 'The Diarchy Debate', *West Africa*, 13 May 1985, pp. 937-8.

32. 'The Political Debate', *West Africa*, 14 April 1986, pp. 768-9.

government not only eclipses the electoral accountability of the rulers to the ruled, it also tends to give rise to a continuous and relatively enduring expansion in the military's role responsibility and self-conception. Moreover, it creates confusion about which is the real source of authority in the country—the law (the constitution) or armed force—and undermines civilian control over the military *qua* military, which is a critical feature of a democratic society. Perhaps most disturbing is the highly equivocal commitment of most military establishments in developing countries to democracy and human rights. The violations of civil liberties under the Buhari-Idiagbon dictatorship, as well as the real and alleged incidents of state violence under the Babangida regime,³³ raise grave doubts about the suitability of the Nigerian military as a partner in, or guarantor of, a new democratic system in Nigeria. Finally, the frequency of military coups against military governments, both in Nigeria and throughout Africa, contradicts the assumption, common to virtually all diarchy proposals, that military participation in government would make democracy more stable.

How, then, shall an independent oversight institution be constituted? I believe a purely civilian institution is possible, and Nigeria could contribute significantly to the development of democracy worldwide by innovating the construction of it. The challenge is to identify groups and organizations that are autonomous from party politics and command general respect in the society. Such groups could then be asked each to nominate a member or officer to serve on a national oversight council, which would have as its sole and explicit purpose the supervision of the above named regulatory bodies. Such a National Oversight Council would have the following responsibilities: appointing the members of the regulatory bodies, and having the sole authority to remove them, under certain explicitly stated circumstances, before the end of their terms; supervising the conduct of these bodies and checking any efforts to introduce partisan or other biased considerations into their deliberations; and determining their level of funding, which the National Assembly might then have the authority to review but to alter only by vote of a special majority.

A list of groups and associations from which such a National Council could be constituted might include: the Nigerian Bar Association; the Nigerian Medical Association; the Nigeria Labour Congress; the Nigerian Chamber of Commerce and/or the Nigerian Association of Manufacturers; the Academic Staff Union of Universities; the National Association of Nigerian Students; the Nigerian Union of Journalists; and women's

33. On the Buhari-Idiagbon regime, see Larry Diamond, 'Nigeria Update', *Foreign Affairs*, 64 (1985), pp. 326–36. The concerns about the Babangida regime include the killing of several university students by police in May 1986 and the assassination by parcel bomb in October 1986 of Dele Giwa, Editor-in-chief of *Newswatch* magazine. Circumstantial evidence links the latter incident to the state security services and as of this writing the government has ignored widespread calls for an independent commission of enquiry.

organizations such as Women in Nigeria and the National Organization of Nigerian Women Societies. Admittedly, this group is over-representative of professionals and intellectuals, but this might be balanced by adding two or three traditional rulers and representatives from associations of peasants, market women and traders. The body need not, and probably should not, be large. The key to its effectiveness would be its independence from partisan politics. For this reason, any group that agreed to be represented in this oversight council should have to surrender its right to endorse candidates for electoral office.³⁴

Staggered elections

An important issue in the design of a new constitution is the length of term in office for major elective officials and how the expirations of those terms are timed. One unfortunate feature of the electoral structure in the Second republic was that the terms of every state and national electoral office expired at precisely the same four-year interval, and so everything was contested simultaneously. While this economized on scarce resources of electoral administration, it also put too much pressure on these once-every-four-years contests. With everything up for grabs, it was highly likely that a failed and fraudulent election would bring the system crashing down.

Both for the efficiency of electoral administration and the civility and integrity of the electoral process, elections should be staggered in the future, so that only a portion of the offices are contested in any one election. There are several ways of doing this. Let us assume here that the system will again be a presidential one, given the contributions that presidentialism made in the Second Republic to cross-cutting and balancing ethnic cleavages.³⁵ If all the executive and legislative offices have, as in the Second Republic, four year terms, half of them could be contested every two years, some coming in a Presidential election year and some in an off-year. Alternatively, if a single six year term is chosen for the president (and perhaps the state governors), mid-term elections could be held every two years or every three years. The combination of a six-year term for presidents and governors along with staggered legislative elections every two years would best diffuse the pressure of electoral competition.³⁶ Then, one-third of the state governors (and perhaps a third of the senators) would come up for election

34. Another condition for this body's legitimacy and effectiveness would probably be some provision to ensure its representativeness of ethnic and regional diversity in the country. This could be achieved by applying a zoning system to its composition, such that each group would be requested to nominate a member from a particular zone in the country, with the zones rotating among the associations over time.

35. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, pp. 635–8.

36. Three-year electoral intervals would make for less flexibility, since they would require that state and federal legislators either have six-year terms, in which case half of them would come up for election every three years, or else three-year terms, in which case all of them would contest every time, defeating the purpose of staggered elections.

every two years. If the House of Representatives and state Houses of Assembly were given four year terms, half of their members would contest elections every two years.

Beyond distributing the political stakes over more than one election, such a system of staggered elections would give the Federal Electoral Commission more experience in the conduct of elections. It would require a more continuous updating of the electoral register and would compel FEDECO to maintain a much larger and more professional permanent staff, independent of local and state elected officials and more partisan elements in the bureaucracy. These are important requirements for the integrity of the electoral process in Nigeria.³⁷

The transition to democracy

One of the most profound and least appreciated flaws in the Second Republic was the chaotic state of the party system. Parties were continually feuding and rupturing internally. Politicians and elected officials moved from one party to another in a continuous stream of defections and realignments, open and de facto. In and of itself, this was not necessarily unhealthy for democracy, but the general situation it produced was one of constant political crisis, opportunism and institutional weakness. Internally, the parties lacked substantive coherence and procedural consensus and had trouble as well developing organizational depth, complexity and autonomy, since they were so much absorbed with their struggle to survive. Between them, the parties lacked any basis for mutual trust, largely because their only experience with one another was the struggle for power in 1979 and the bitterness of its aftermath. As a result, the parties lacked confidence both in themselves and in one another.

As was the case in the 'Great Debate' over the structure of the Second Republic, many Nigerians today are questioning whether political parties are necessary and appropriate for democracy in their country.³⁸ In fact, the current political debate reflects a widespread popular cynicism with party politics, and more than a few influential political and military leaders have called for a zero- or one-party system as the solution to the political corruption, fraud and violence that have attended party competition in Nigeria. But this is to mistake the framework for the cause. It is not party competition *per se* which is the cause but rather the enormous premium on power and the inadequacy of structural means to ensure accountability. Moreover, it is doubtful how genuine competition for national power can

37. Haroun Adamu and Alaba Ogunsanwo, *Nigeria: the making of the presidential system 1979 General Elections*, (Kano, Nigeria: Triumph Publishing Co., 1983), p. 187.

38. W. Ibekwe Ofonagoro, Abiola Ojo, and Adele Jinadu, (eds.), *The Great Debate: Nigerian viewpoints on the draft Constitution, 1976-77* (Lagos: Daily Times, 1977), pp. 390-408; and 'The Political Debate', *West Africa*, 14 April 1986, pp. 768-9.

exist in the absence of multiple parties. The political party is the indispensable instrument for the articulation, aggregation and representation of political interests and principles in a modern, large-scale democratic system. It is the primary vehicle for mobilizing new voters, linking the elite with the mass, and organizing the competition for power around common interests and policy preferences.³⁹ Hence, to ban political parties is to repress one of the primary instruments of democratic participation and one of the most basic elements of the freedom of association.

The challenge ahead for Nigeria is not to do away with parties (as if this could somehow banish the unseemly aspects of the struggle for power), but to enable them to develop those features that are the mark of institutional maturity and strength: coherence, complexity, autonomy and adaptability.⁴⁰ Institutional development takes time and patience, as well as organizational skill and imagination.

Party leaders were not short of skill and creativity in the Second Republic, but they were desperately short of time. Although the transition from military rule to the Second Republic spanned four years, it was not until three of those years had passed that the ban on political parties was lifted. From 21 September 1978, aspiring political parties were given only three months to submit their registration forms to FEDECO. Given that political activities had been banned for thirteen years and that the parties of the First Republic were to remain prohibited, this left little time to found 'wholly "new" parties . . . , to establish followers throughout the country, and to satisfy the other stringent requirements . . . in the Constitution'.⁴¹ The compression of this period for party development and registration followed from the military's own deeply ambivalent attitude toward political parties, but it had precisely the opposite effect from that intended by the Supreme Military Council. Under the intense pressure of imminent elections, most truly fresh political formations either fractured into more familiar forms or died stillborn. Politicians tended to retreat into more convenient and familiar ethnic political alignments, and new political thinkers and activists were forced to draft old political warhorses to make their incipient parties viable. As a result, parties failed to develop the national breadth, fresh profiles and new ideas they might have; instead, they were forced to swallow contradictions that were bound to explode at some point.⁴²

39. Gabriel Almond and G. Bingham Powell, *Comparative Politics: system, process and policy*, 2nd ed., (Little, Brown & Co., 1978); Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems*, (Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 18–29.

40. Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, (Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 12–14.

41. Claude S. Phillips, 'Nigeria's New Political Institutions, 1975–9', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 18 (1980), p. 15.

42. See next page.

The clear lesson is that parties need more time to develop, free from the pressures of an imminent election in which everything of political importance will be at stake. They need time not only to develop their organizational structures and political identities, but also to build relationships of mutual tolerance and trust with one another; only in this way can there be developed the confidence that defeat will not mean political death and victory will be tempered by magnanimity. Such a system of 'mutual security' can only grow gradually over many years and several elections.⁴³ This is one reason for staggering elections, so that everything is not at stake at once. It is also an argument for phasing in elections gradually, from the bottom up, so that parties can get accustomed to competing with one another and can internalize the rules of democratic competition, beginning at levels where the stakes are small and the risks low, while the military remains on hand as a referee of political competition. Finally, the need for time, experience and political learning in developing party organizations and interparty trust counsels against banning all politicians of the Second Republic from future political involvement, as President Babangida has done.⁴⁴

All of this argues for a much longer and more methodically phased transition to fully competitive democracy than has typically been contemplated in Nigeria. Such a transition would restore electoral competition gradually, to successively higher levels of political authority. A possible scenario would begin with permission soon for the election of local government councils. This would begin to get people involved in the democratic process again and establish representative voices, old and new, at the grassroots. These new officials could not only regenerate democracy from the bottom up, they could also become influential in shaping the remaining phases of the transition process. This stage would be followed by the election of a non-partisan constituent assembly, as in the Second Republic, to draft a constitution. The third development would involve lifting the ban on the formation of political parties, but allow a lengthy period of time, at least a year, before parties could even begin to submit their applications for registration to FEDECO. This would give political leaders time to negotiate with one another and to canvass the nation, so as to develop more broadly based and original political parties.

42. Anthony Kirk-Greene, 'The Making of the Second Republic', in Anthony Kirk-Greene and Douglas Rimmer, *Nigeria Since 1970: a political and economic outline* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1981), pp. 31-7; Richard A. Joseph, 'Political Parties and Ideology in Nigeria', *Review of African Political Economy*, 13 (1978), pp. 78-90, and 'The Ethnic Trap: notes on the Nigerian campaign and elections, 1978-79', *Issue*, 11 (1981), p. 18; and Larry Diamond, 'Social Change and Political Conflict in Nigeria's Second Republic', in I. William Zartman, (ed.), *The Political Economy of Nigeria* (New York: Praeger, 1983), pp. 25-84.

43. Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: participation and opposition*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), pp. 10-16, 33-40.

44. *West Africa*, 7 July 1986, pp. 1403-6.

Another long interval of time, at least another year, would then be allowed between the start of party registration and the date of the first partisan election, which might be for state legislatures, which would serve for some period of time (between two and four years) alongside military governors. Thereafter a national assembly would be elected, which would serve alongside a military President for some transition period. Only after that would civilian governors be elected to replace the military governors, with terms of office of varied length to allow for staggered elections in the future; finally, at least two to four years after the national assembly had been elected, and perhaps as much as ten years after the transition had begun, would the national election of a president or prime minister be allowed.

Such a lengthy transition raises several serious concerns: that it would not only extend the period of arbitrary and authoritarian rule, but might tempt the military to try to institutionalize its political role and even to cancel the transition, while also threatening rivalry and turmoil within the military. These are legitimate concerns.

Preventing military abuse of power in this transitional period (including the corruption in office that might lead some officers to want to extend their stay as long as possible) requires that the military subject *itself* to the rule of law as a first step in its declared intention to build a more enduring democratic system. One condition in this regard would be a new or reactivated Bill of Rights, to which the Armed Forces Ruling Council could be held accountable in the courts of law. Another would be for the AFRC to put in place immediately the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal, to monitor the conduct of both military and civilian office-holders throughout the transition. At the same time, the independent National Oversight Council described above could be inaugurated to take responsibility for the code of conduct apparatus, perhaps the judiciary, and later the elections.

There is no inherent reason why a military government cannot take such steps. In fact, there is every reason to question its professed commitment to democracy and public accountability if it does not do so. If these lofty goals are ever to be institutionalized in Nigeria, some regime must take the first courageous step by allowing itself to be held accountable. No regime would be better positioned to establish this legacy than a military regime, such as President Babangida's, that has voluntarily committed itself to a democratic transition.

As for the probability of regime instability during this period or even the abortion of the whole transition process, the recent Brazilian transition to democracy suggests the value of clear and limited terms of office for military heads of state. This not only limits the personalization of, and rivalry for, power, but also establishes the principle of constitutional and orderly succession.

Perhaps the most serious problem with a long transition is the likely



impatience of the people, and of course the politicians, for a full military withdrawal. This would be attenuated at least to some extent if procedural accountability were established soon, along with democratic elections for local governments that would have some real responsibility and autonomy. If the announced timetable were faithfully implemented, this would also enhance public confidence in, and commitment to, the process. But beyond this, Nigerians must now ponder frankly whether the speed of a transition to democracy is not inversely related to the prospects for consolidating democracy in their country. One may argue that it is better for a nation to take the time to build painstakingly the institutions and understandings that make democracy durable, even at the price of extending the period of semi-authoritarian rule, than to risk descent into a generation or more of repression and praetorianism.

Conclusion

Nigeria stands now at a crossroads. It cannot live with authoritarian rule and yet it has twice failed to make democratic government work. The overthrow of the repressive Buhari-Idiagbon dictatorship marked the beginning of the long road back to democracy. The current debate on the constitutional future marks another step along that path. But historically, in other nations, that path has been a long and painful one, often involving failures, and sometimes repeated ones (France now has its Fifth Republic). Where democracy has been finally consolidated, these successes have been steered by skilled and creative political leaders, willing to compromise, committed to the democratic process and capable of innovating in the design of democratic institutions.

Constitutional innovations alone cannot solve the problems facing democracy in Nigeria. But they can compensate for some of the weaknesses in the social structure and political environment. Even the most imaginative constitutions may be relentlessly abused. But a shrewdly crafted constitution may reduce the scope for abuse and so tilt the odds in favour of those who are committed to the democratic process above any partisan, personal or ideological interest.

The Second Republic went an impressive distance in innovating in the 'institutional architecture' of democracy. That it failed should not be cause for cynicism or despair. There was much about the design and performance of that system in which Nigerians may take pride. If the specific flaws of that experience can be corrected with equal boldness and imagination, a Third Republic can emerge from that foundation and endure.

ON MUSIC IN CONTEMPORARY WEST AFRICA

KWABENA FOSU-MENSAH, LUCY DURAN, AND CHRIS STAPLETON

(Editors' Note: A Journal which attempts to reflect African society in all its many guises needs to pay attention to the Arts, to drama, literature, and music, because they often provide a fascinating window to a people's concerns and perceptions of daily life. At the African Studies Association Conference in September 1986 three short papers were presented at a panel on *Music in Africa* and they are reproduced here as three separate parts of what appears to be a single article. The first section was written by Kwabena Fosu-Mensah, who is currently a member of the staff at the Ghanaian High Commission in London and a freelance journalist of contemporary 'African music'; the second section was written by Lucy Duran, who works in the British Library Sound Archive; and the final section was written by Chris Stapleton, a freelance writer specializing in African music. We hope that these brief pieces will encourage others to submit articles on the Arts in Africa, especially where they have direct relevance to social and political life.)

African musicians and the music industry

THE TERM 'AFRICAN MUSIC' has always been misleading to the extent that it has been loosely used to refer to music played by African musicians. The only general consensus, however, is that this music is one created by black Africans who live south of the Sahara Desert or one consisting of elements inspired by or derived from black Africa no matter who plays it.

The reality is that there is no one definable music form which we can call 'African music'. There are numerous tribal, community, ethnic and regional variations in musical styles culminating in the creation of various pop music forms such as hi-life, juju, soukous, makossa, mbaqanga and many others. Common characteristics in Africa include emphasis on lyrical content, call-and-answer vocal technique, the use of drums, strong rhythmic sense, spontaneous creation, relationship between music and social life, skilled improvisation and frequent use of harmony and polyphony.

It is the collective of these music pop forms which have recently created some 'interest' in the West even though the practice of music in Africa dates back several centuries before contact with the outside world. What is clear is that this is not the first time the West has expressed a semblance of 'interest' in the music of black Africa. The impact of 'African music' on world beat has happened several times before, including the Miriam Makeba era in the United States, the Afro-rock span of Osibisa in the United Kingdom, Manu Dibango's 'Soul Makossa' period in the United States and the juju bubble created by King Sunny Ade. In all these periods of apparent 'interest' in 'African music', the impression is created that this music is for a minority who are either marginally adventurous or are looking for something new.

This music, therefore, has never made it to the top even though it has always supplied the pop world with many basic music structures and accessories.

For this reason one needs to analyse whether there is in fact a genuine 'interest' in the commercial sense or a mere passing fancy for novelty to which 'African music' is sometimes relegated. Though I shall discuss this matter later on, I may say that Western 'interest' in 'African music' is more for its entertainment value than as a commodity in which Western record companies are keen to invest large sums of money. Even the very few times when any financial 'interest' has been shown in this music the approach has only been half-hearted, which has further harmed the image of the music. In other words, there is enough evidence to suggest that Western music fans have shown more interest than record companies.

Far from sounding pessimistic, 'African music' has always been regarded as the pop music of tomorrow due to its vibrant nature, rhythmic strength and structural values. Assuming therefore that there is a genuine 'interest' this time around, African musicians and the entire music industry have a duty to react to the attendant challenges and dictates of economic and professional activities arising out of the 'interest'.

As has always been the practice, Westerners judge by their own standards and will definitely seek to match their records against those of the African musician. These values will include such technical details as sound production, recording, mixing, mastering, pressing, album design, distribution, promotion and publicity. Some of these are bound to be new to the African musicians because the majority of them operate in the seller's market where competition is only minimal.

The music itself might not escape changes if the objective would be to play for Western audience. There are likely to be many options open to African musicians. First, they could adopt Western musical style and/or language as Nayanka Bell (Côte d'Ivoire) in 'Amio/Get Up and Dance', George Darko (Ghana) in 'Hi-Life Time' or Brenda Fassi (South Africa) in 'Weekend Special'; second, they could mix African and Western styles as Bill Laswell's co-production with Fela Anikulapo Kuti (Nigeria) in 'Army Arrangement' or Manu Dibango (Cameroon) in 'Electric Africa'; third, they could water down music entirely to suit Western ears as Jimmy Takoube (Cameroon) in 'Dream Me Up'; fourth, they could incorporate Western tunes into African music idiom as Youssou N'Dour (Senegal) in 'Rubberband Man' or Ramblers (Ghana) in 'Knock On Wood'; fifth, they could ignore Western audiences and play purely African sounds as Ko Nimo (Ghana) in 'Asamado'; sixth, they could record instrumental African tunes to beat the linguistic barrier as Redcap James (Ghana) in 'Ko Ara So'; seventh, they could merely interpret African music on Western instruments as les Ambassadeurs (Mali) in 'Djougouya'; finally, they could record two albums, one for the home turf and the other for international market.

Music and dance tend to function together in most African societies. Africans have therefore been endowed with a fantastic sense of rhythm. But dance in the Western sense would include choreography, stage act, communication with the audience, stage decoration and make-up, most of which most African musicians take for granted.

In certain quarters it is believed that African musicians would have to sing in English or some other international language if their music is to be accepted in the West. There have been a few examples to support this view, such as George Darko's 'Akoo Te Brofo' which never received any attention in the West until the same song was released in English as 'Hi-Life Time' some months later subject to a few changes. Nayanka Bell did the same with 'Amio' which was later released as 'Get Up And Dance'. Since Anglo-Saxons generally control the world pop music industry, the fact that songs done in other European languages never make the charts in the United Kingdom or the United States lends credence to this belief. The same school of thought also argues that African musicians may successfully mix their local language with English words or phrases or better still rap in English. This might coast the style Fela Anikulapo Kuti who sings in pidgin English as in 'Lady'.

Another school of thought believes that language might not matter at all in music. They point to Zairean (or Congolese) and South African music which feature prominently on the priority list of most Westerners. This naturally has something to do with the rock guitar style of the Zaireans and the regular beat of South African music. There is in fact no one or easy solution to this linguistic problem but there is strong evidence to suggest that simplicity and regularity of beat might offer a partial answer. By way of offering some concessions to the curious Western listener, it may be advantageous to be simple and concise with titles even if the African musician decides to sing in his native language. He may opt either to give English sub-titles to songs or provide detailed information on the subject-matter in the sleeve note at the back of the album sleeve.

The music industry is particularly complex and demanding. African music had generally been practised on an amateur level until the last few years, except for the few griots who continue to make a living out of music. The majority of musicians had been generally either illiterates or semi-literates, though a growing number of them now have basic education. Education of the musician would be essential if he has to make the desired progress with his music. More often than not the musician assumes the management role and that makes it even more imperative for him to be able to grasp the details and the complexities of the industry. Running everything single-handed is an impossible task and the African musician has to learn to engage the services of a professional hand. The musician will definitely need advice on matters relating to copyrights, royalties, contract,

financial planning and investment if he is to make any impact in the West where the music market is much more competitive.

In the quest for better prospects abroad, many African musicians have gone to the West since the 1960s and the number is increasing in response to the 'interest' shown in 'African music' in the West. What makes the exodus even more pressing is the fact that there are only scanty facilities for recording music and pressing records in most African countries. The international music industry has benefited most from the mass exodus because many African musicians are now found in Western groups while others, such as Manu Dibango and Ray Lema (Zaire), are collaborating and co-producing with Western musicians.

Some African countries, including Ghana, are fast losing some of their best musicians but the exodus probably augurs well for the countries since these musicians are gradually learning both the basics and the complexities of the industry. It is estimated that for the 1983/84 period there were some 35 albums released by the Ghanaian diaspora. It is also a fact that there are more Ghanaian records in London than in Accra.

There is strong evidence to suggest that the music of the African musicians who have gone to the West changes. There is the strongest temptation to infuse Western styles into the music with the view either to getting a deal with a Western record company or making an impact on the music scene. Some, such as George Darko and Kassiry (Côte d'Ivoire), have made some impact with their fusion music but the rest have yet to catch up due, largely, to financial constraints.

New musical styles are gradually evolving out of the fusion between some African pop forms and those of the West or elsewhere. Ghanaian musicians abroad, especially those in West Germany and notably George Darko, are creating a fusion out of hi-life and disco music referred to as 'burger' hi-life in certain places; Kassiry, too, has manufactured 'gnama gnaman' out of aloukou and disco music; George Dikson (Cameroon) is also in the process of fashioning out 'makozouk' which is a fusion of his native makossa and the Martinique-Guadeloupean 'zouk'.

As a great number of African musicians go abroad as a result of frustrations at home, they soon realize that the music industry is far more complex in the West than they had thought. Apart from financial constraints, they soon discover how difficult it is to get a deal from record companies. As further frustration and disappointments set in, some either give up playing music altogether or try to operate in many groups in order to make ends meet. This practice is creating a bad impression about African music but the musicians can hardly do anything about it. These musicians are consequently likely to conclude that the concept of Western 'interest' in 'African music' is a myth.

Problems facing 'African music' in the West are not too different from that

of black music in general. In an article 'Slaves to the Rhythm' (published in the 14 June 1986 issue of *New Musical Express*) Paolo Hewitt enumerated some of the reasons why the black music industry, including 'African music', faces problems in the United Kingdom. He noted first the lack of understanding of that music and then went on to observe that all the heads of Black Music at CBS, Polydor, London and 10 Records were whites. The same went for most of the other important areas within a company, publicity, artists and recording, and marketing. Few blacks were employed in them. Furthermore, it was very difficult in Britain to market black music because the magazines, again, were mainly run by whites so that, with record companies largely hostile, black musicians who do break through tend to do so with a music sanitized in terms of both sound and lyrical content. Even though black music made up 40 per cent of the charts, it was still looked down upon. Not surprisingly, black groups break up after a short space of time and lack professionalism. Worst of all, black artists are not encouraged to be creative; on the contrary, they are encouraged to be commercial.

Even though the article might smack of laying blame at the door of racism,⁷ it rightly draws attention to attitudes towards black music in general. Manu Dibango and Fela Anikulapo Kuti have not been all that happy with the production of their music by Bill Laswell, who was imposed on them by Celluloid Records; only a few radio stations are playing African records; *Tom Harke* by Aaron Lerolé (South Africa) and others made a major hit in the United Kingdom in the mid-fifties but there was no follow up commitment by the big record companies; only a tiny minority of African musicians manage to get even a short-term deal with big record companies. All these factors show the extent of the problems facing 'African music' in the West.

It is never easy to introduce a foreign culture and practices into another environment but 'African music' can hardly be considered new since it has been around for years in most parts of the world, including the Continent where it is thought to be well received. The music of Francophone Africa and the French Carribean is creating considerable attention in France and elsewhere while 'African music' in general is attracting a lot of interest in the Netherlands, Italy, Greece, Denmark, Norway and other parts of the world. The reverse appears to be the case in the United Kingdom and some observers believe that the story would have been different if Anglo-Saxons were not in control of the world pop music industry. This is the way an Anglo-Saxon journalist, Simon Reynolds, reviewed a live African show in the 30 August 1986 issue of *Melody Maker*: '... I have a hard time with African music at the best of times ... it's just no use to me. Everyone else here had a very good time. But me, I just can't stand the piety that surrounds African music. I don't see why I should have to be prised from my Smith's singles ... to come and be enriched by THIS'.

'African music' is generally thought to be complicated for the average Anglo-Saxon whose sense of rhythm is usually out of focus with African musical styles. That partly explains the reason why most Anglo-Saxons would identify more easily with the regular beat of South African music. The very nature of the Anglo-Saxon, as it seems to me, imposes certain constraints on the African musician who wants to sell abroad.

Money is power and some African musicians contend that African records make more sales in Africa than in the West and that it would be better to concentrate on the African markets. Hugh Masekela (South Africa) in a recent interview said: 'If money was available, it would have been better to build better recording studios and bigger pressing plants back home in Africa and export our records abroad. We would then have the freedom to play what we like'.

Rome was not built in a day and it is perhaps too soon for African musicians to give up the struggle for recognition and support in the West. Whatever happens, however, the infrastructure for the music industry in Africa must be improved. Nigeria fortunately has several multi-track recording studios and many pressing plants and Gabon, too, has now installed a 48-track studio, but the majority of other African countries have either nothing or only 8-track studios at best. With the exodus of African musicians to the West there is the likelihood that they will in future share their experiences with those back home for the benefit of the music industry in Africa. Youssou N'Dour and Franco (Zaire) among others dream of a better and more efficient distribution and concert promotion systems throughout Africa.

The question of marketing African artists and their music abroad could be dealt with more professionally if the economies of African countries become stronger. Bob Geldof and his group have made a significant contribution towards relieving hunger problems in the Sahelian region of Africa. Their efforts need to be sustained by music development aid by international financial institutions in order to ease the strain over dependence on primary commodities whose prices fluctuate widely. African musicians in the West, therefore, have the responsibility to strive for recognition and high achievements in order to strengthen the music industry at home.

In conclusion, I would concede that the current 'interest' in 'African music' in the West would impose a lot more responsibilities on the African musician due to differences of approach and the complexities of the international scene. The problems are many but only hard work can rectify the situation. The big record companies are not likely to invest in 'African music' in the short term and the rescue would seem to lie with independent labels. The fusion between African and other musical forms is a healthy experiment which is likely to be mutually beneficial. There are attitudes to change but the happy state of today is that, with more African groups coming

to play in the West, African music will be more common. Other avenues will soon be open to musicians in general and African music will in time lodge itself in the main circuit.

Jaliya and the role of the Jali in present day Manding society

JALIYA is the art of the Jalis, the hereditary musicians of the Manding peoples of West Africa. It is a highly skilled tradition of praise song and instrumental music dating back at least to the time of Sunjata Keita in the 13th century. In pre-colonial times, the Jalis were associated mainly with the nobility and their music was not meant for a wider audience. Today, however, *jaliya* is one of the most conspicuous forms of traditional music in those countries where the Manding constitute an important political and economic force: Mali, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Gambia and the Ivory Coast. It is featured widely on radio and television, it constitutes a large part of the repertoire of state-subsidized national ensembles, it forms the basis for the national anthems of several countries, whose presidents are known to have close relationships with particular Jalis. Even in local 'pop' music the songs of the Jalis are frequently used, and in many cases the musicians themselves are Jalis.

To the outsider it would thus seem that *jaliya* is enjoying a wider popularity than ever before. Yet many Jalis today see their situation in a very different light. They believe that the role of the Jali has changed so radically in the last 50 years that the basis for a true art form no longer exists. In the words of one great Jali: 'There is no more Jaliya, only begging'. This section looks at how one of West Africa's great classical traditions is adapting to a new social and economic climate, from the viewpoint of the musicians themselves.

There is a saying which lies at the heart of *jaliya*: 'Jali tigi ning jali tango mang kang' ('He who has a jali is better than he who does not'). Many aspects of the role of the Jali are already well-documented and have been the subject of comment by Arab and European travellers to West Africa from Ibn Battuta onwards. Most recently, the role of the Jali as historian and genealogist was brought to public attention by Alex Haley in his book *Roots*. A much less known aspect of the Jali's life, and one which is crucial for an understanding of the Jali's present-day situation, is the nature of his relationship with his 'patrons' in both former times and the present.

Jaliya has survived over the centuries, and indeed taken shape through the sponsorship of individuals. These individuals were the former kings (*mansa*) or warrior-princes (*nyancho*) of the Manding kingdoms, starting of course with Sunjata himself. In the 19th century, they were also the great religious and secular leaders such as Sheikh Umar Tall and Samory Touré. After the advent of colonial rule, it was the chiefs, demoted from kings,

who were the main patrons of musicians, and to some extent this tradition continues today.

The word 'patron' is one way of translating the Manding term *Jatigi* or *Jati*, used by the musicians themselves. The term literally means 'host', and reveals much about the form that patronage took in pre-colonial times and in some instances up to about the end of the Second World War. The Jalis were great travellers, sometimes covering several thousand kilometres throughout the Manding territory, often travelling with their entire families. This appears to have been particularly the case in the late 19th century, when many musicians migrated from Mali to the Gambia river area and to southern Senegal. These travels, which were usually seasonal, were broken up with many stopovers in villages or towns along the way. On arrival in a new place, the Jali would pay his respects to the local chief, presenting him with kola nuts; the chief in turn was expected to provide food and accommodation for the Jali and his family throughout their stay. Thus the chief would literally be the Jali's host. On the eve of the Jali's departure, it was customary to hold a large gathering during which the Jali would perform for the entire village. His reward for this would be gifts of food, cloth, domestic animals, slaves, and gold or silver, according to the wealth of the host. If the Jali's music was considered outstanding, or a particularly close friendship had struck up between musician and host, he might be invited to settle in the village.

It is clear from the oral testimony of older Jalis that permanent settlement in one place is a recent phenomenon due to current economic and social factors. Previously, however, the Jali would leave his village for up to six months at a time, building up a network of secondary hosts, often the friends or relatives of his main host. The death of the main host frequently resulted in the musician up-rooting completely in search of new patronage; hence the expression often quoted in the songs: 'yiriba boita, kunolu janjanta' (the big tree (i.e. the host) has fallen, and the birds (the musicians) have scattered). Travel and search for patronage was also the way in which the apprentice musician was expected to prove that he was ready to branch out on his own.

A large part of patronage therefore took the form of subsistence rather than cash. The ability of the host to provide such subsistence was of course largely dependent on his living on farmland. Since, in the words of one elder Jali 'no single host could meet all the musician's needs', seasonal travel took the burden off the main host and allowed the musician to come in contact with a new repertoire and styles. On the other hand, the Jali did spend long periods of time living in close proximity with his host; the children of the Jalis would play with the host's children, and although the Jali was regarded as socially inferior since he was not 'freeborn', a degree of intimacy and mutual understanding was the essence of their relationship. There was also a

mutual dependency. The host relied on his musician for advice and practical assistance on all domestic and professional matters, and for absolute trustworthiness. The musician relied on the host for his livelihood, the roof over his head, and status. It is no doubt relevant in this context that originally there was only one family, the Kuyate, who were regarded as Jalis, but over the centuries, certain other families, such as the Jobate, Suso, Kanute, and Sacko, also chose to become musicians.

'Mansolu man bang bari i doyata' ('The kings have not gone completely, but there are very few left'), is a constant lament in the Jalis' songs today. Most of the factors affecting the decline of patronage are obvious and certainly not unique to the Manding. The most crucial of these was the demotion of the kings to sefo (chief) status under colonial rule. At least as important has been the steady trend towards migration into urban areas. Since the patrons themselves were moving into the towns, the musicians followed them. This immediately takes away the possibility of subsistence patronage, and the provision of hospitality also becomes limited. With the physical separation of the host and his Jali (who may now live far away from each other) the bond of intimacy between them weakens. In an urban environment, the patron is expected above all to show his appreciation with gifts of money. This places a great strain on those members of society to whom the Jalis traditionally look for patronage, and ultimately discourages them altogether from any association with musicians.

The son of a chief in The Gambia, from a rural district but now living in the capital, described what this meant for him. 'My father had several Jalis with whom I grew up and from whom I acquired a deep love of music. Now that I am in the capital, I still continue a close friendship with the families of those musicians. I am prepared to give everything I have for good music, which makes me an easy target. But the reality of the situation is that good musicians are few and far between. If I have a little money in my pocket and I'm approached in the street by a group of 'little Jalis', I feel obliged to give them something, though I know they will look down on me because of the small amount. In the end I spend my time running away from the Jalis and disliking their music'.

This account brings to light several important aspects of present-day *Jaliya*. The first is that the 'begging' (danniro) side is far more common on a day-to-day basis than the artistic side, and eventually interferes with an appreciation of the aesthetics of the music. Second, and in spite of this, most prominent members of Manding society continue to feel an obligation towards the Jalis. The area in which patronage continues most strongly is in politics. Many politicians in The Gambia, Senegal, Guinea and Mali are known to have close associations with particular musicians, often those who are best represented in the record and cassette industry. The entry of *Jaliya* into the political arena is viewed with some concern by the older Jalis,

who feel that their music should not be associated with any one political party. Too many songs nowadays, they say, are merely a catalogue of the names of politicians in power.

The third point of significance is that the son of the chief was brought up in a musical environment and had therefore acquired a discerning ear. All too often, however, those who occupy important posts affecting music, such as cultural officers, radio producers or leaders of national ensembles are not so fortunate. They are almost invariably not Jalis. Widespread illiteracy among Jalis, coupled with their 'caste' status makes it difficult for them to acquire such posts. The consequences for both musicians and audiences are obvious.

Perhaps one of the most encouraging trends of *Jaliya* in the last decade is its use in local 'pop' music. Many of the well-known bands of the Manding countries, bands like the 'Rail Band of Bamako', Mory Kante, Salif Keita, and even some non-Manding bands like those of Youssou N'Dour and Baaba Maal, incorporate many traditional *Jaliya* songs in their repertoire. Some of the personnel of these bands, especially the guitarists and percussionists, are members of the Jali caste. But recently there has been a tendency for singers to be non-Jalis. Singers like Salif Keita are as conversant with the style of *Jaliya* as with other styles, and indeed the song for which he was most famous, 'Mandjou', is a straightforward example of a praise song for Sekou Touré. The use of Manding music in such contexts has done much to promote it both at international and grassroot level. The success of these artists has encouraged others to experiment with some modern elements such as studio techniques in more traditional forms of music, often to great effect, as with Jali Musa Jawara's recent LP disc. The future of *Jaliya* no doubt lies in the concert hall and recording studio, though without individual patronage, it is bound to alter radically in style.

Kinshasa and the spread of Zairean music

The Matonge district of Kinshasa is a music lover's dream. It is a zone dominated by single storey houses, lorry parks, the occasional lavish hotel and all the vibrant trappings of city life: taxis, buses and lorries filled with people, bustling streets, small shops, roadside stalls and all night markets selling everything from candles to medicine to fried fish and tinned tomatoes. There are bars everywhere, bars where taxi drivers drink, bars where businessmen and journalists congregate, bars where people from the wealthier suburbs come to take part in Matonge's frenetic lifestyle.

And everywhere there is music. The sound is Zairean rumba, an invigorating mixture of sweet harmonies, and mesmerizing guitars that pour out of bars, hotel dining rooms, record stores and nightclubs from 10 in the morning to 7 the next. Turn on the radio: Radio Voix du Zaire pumps it

out. The television station shows the latest films of top band Zaiko Langa Langa or Abeti, the regal singer of classic rumba. Record stores line the streets. Down Avenue Kasavubu there are 20 in 50 yards, small, one storey buildings with lists of the latest hits chalked on blackboards outside; inside, racks of album covers.

Three studios support this flow of music. One is owned by an astute musician and businessman called Verckys, who produces local bands on his own Veve label and offers smaller companies recording facilities. The second is owned by the radio station and the third by a band called Bobongo Stars.

But Kinshasa's music extends far beyond the albums. Musicians, like sportsmen, have a rare status in the city. They are heroes, whose likes, dislikes and latest moves are discussed endlessly in the local press and specialist magazines like *Disco*. They are feted for their fashions; top youth stars will order clothes direct from Dior and the top couturiers of Paris and Rome and make a point of displaying the new clothes and designer labels on stage, a practice known locally as *la griffe*. The top stars are also celebrated for their larger than life personalities, and for the hope and excitement they bring to the city youth, who suffer joblessness and over-crowding in this most active of neighbourhoods.

There are a host of top names, from the flamboyant Papa Wemba who also runs a football team, to Zaiko Langa Langa formed in 1968 who play a rebellious, unruly brand of music with an image to match, and a series of others, from Victoria Eleison to Choc Stars and Langa Langa Stars, all of whom branched out from the Zaiko parent.

But the scene is not entirely dominated by young bands. Of the older musicians, Tabu Ley with his Orchestre Afrisa and Franco, leader of OK Jazz, have led the field since the early days of electric music in Kinshasa. OK Jazz was formed in 1956; Tabu Ley's band, originally African Fiesta, in 1963. Of the two, Franco plays a particularly significant role in Kinshasa, writing long, sometimes controversial songs that deal with the relationship between men and women, the problems of polygamous households and other, more 'official' themes: songs in praise of President Mobutu, and, during the Zairean cultural revolution of 1973, songs explaining how the country's towns, villages, cities and rivers would receive new, authentically Zairean names.

Such musicians play a vital role, offering entertainment and providing a cohesive social force. 'Take away the music and the beer', says one Zairean television journalist, 'and the city falls apart'. An exaggeration perhaps, but there can be few cities, African or otherwise, where music plays such an important and spectacular role.

Nor does Zairean music confine itself to one country. From the early days of the acoustic guitarists, the music spread. The electric music,

created in the fifties, offered a true virtually pan-African sound at a time when African nationalism was at a peak. Today it is hard to find a country, from Zimbabwe to Kenya, Nigeria to Senegal where local musicians have not adapted freely from the catalogue of Zairean rhythms and guitar and vocal styles.

First, let me introduce some basic terms. Zairean music became popular in colonial times, when the Belgian Congo was still in existence, so it is still common to talk about Congolese music and Congolese guitar styles. Today, 'Congolese' covers music both from Zaire and from neighbouring Congo Brazzaville which produces a similar music. The usual practise is to talk about Zairean music, when being specific about the country, and Congolese styles, to define the genre.

The music itself has two names. The Zaireans speak of rumba to distinguish the slower form of dance music. The faster up-tempo music is referred to as soukous. Both terms started with specific meanings and are now used in a general, all embracing fashion.

Modern Zairean music has its roots in the towns and mining centres that grew up in the colonial period in the Belgian Congo. Zairean musicologist Kazadi wa Mukuna has traced a number of crucial early developments. Among them were the work camps based around the Congolese railway, which linked Leopoldville, now Kinshasa, with the coastal town, Matadi and the mining Union Minière du Haut Katanga, which was founded in 1906. In these camps a population of migrant workers from Mozambique, Nyasaland (Malawi) and the West Indies lived and worked alongside the Congolese. Slowly the multi-ethnic population produced a new musical mixture. The two main constituents were a series of imported Latin American rhythms, which ranged from the rumba, to the meringue, cha cha, pachanga and bolero, and a local dance known as the maringa. Danced either in a circle or as couples, maringa was accompanied by a likembe, or lamellaphone (the 'thumb piano'), an iron bell, for rhythm, and a small drum called the patenge.

Kazadi explains that the maringa was popular in the twenties. Other historians, such as David Birmingham and Phyllis M. Martin, in their *History of Central Africa*, put the date earlier. 'Maringa dance halls were generally found in the urban centres of the lower Congo', they write, but towards the end of World War I, the "bad dances" spread over the whole area'. They also note that Kimbangu, the Congolese prophet, ordered his followers to abstain from alcohol and the maringa dances.

New instruments were introduced into the maringa: the accordion, brought by missionaries and migrant workers, and the guitar. African guitars have been noted in the ancient Kongo kingdom as far back as the 16th century. The Spanish, or 'dry' guitar, appeared around the end of the First World War. The man usually credited with bringing it into Zaire is a sailor

called Daniel Dondo, who played in the Matadi area and inspired a new generation of Zairean acoustic guitarists.

The best known names in modern times are Jean Bosco Mwenda and Antoine Wendo, who characterized the two poles of early Congolese music. Bosco played maringa in what was then the Katanga province and incorporated a range of influences, some of them coming from the copper belt to the south. Wendo is one of the founding figures of modern Kinshasa music. He started playing in 1939 as a sailor on a ship working the River Congo. Merchant vessels, like mining centres, brought together a range of people, including, crucially, Sierra Leoneans whom Wendo credits with the introduction of the rumba rhythm into Zaire.

In 1940, Wendo came to Kinshasa and became a leading figure in the new music that was sweeping the bars of the city. Up to that point, the brass bands or fanfares, such as L'Odéon Kinois, had provided the main source of dance music, playing re-Africanized rhythms known as Matindique, from Martinique. Wendo formed one of Zaire's earliest guitar-based bands, Victoria, and became a leading rumba player amongst other musicians such as Paul Kamba, the accordionist Feruzzi, and Jhimmy, who played acoustic guitar in a Hawaiian style.

Wendo's 'Maria Louise', recorded in 1949, was the first Congolese record. As the fifties progressed, new orchestras sprang up, consisting of accordions, violins, and brass instruments and playing mixtures of rumba, maringa plus Latin rhythms. A leading figure of modern Zairean music, Joseph Kabasela (known as Kalle) formed his band African Jazz in 1953. The rumba became electric, and Kalle's guitarists, Dr Nico and his brother Dechaud, went on to define a new school of guitar music with a solo guitarist and rhythmic or *mi-solo* creating a complicated and highly melodic cross rhythm. Kalle's music embraced Latin rhythms, as his greatest single 'Independence Cha Cha' (1960) suggests, as well as the early Congolese rumbas. After Kalle, two styles of music developed. One of his singers, Tabu Ley, continued the African Jazz mould, a melodic style using outside influences to the full. Franco's OK Jazz, formed in 1956, specialized in boleros before turning full time to the rumba in a more traditional style.

Between 1960 and 1970 new rumba variations appeared—the *kara kara*, *boucher*, *soukous*, *kiri kiri*, each offering different rhythms and dance steps. As Kazadi reports, the Apollo, launched during the 1969 moon landing, brought the slow astronaut steps to Kinshasa dance floors. A significant shift took place in 1968 when the formation of Zaiko Langa Langa heralded a new youth sound. Zaiko's music, encapsulated in its revamped folk rhythm the *cavacha* in the early seventies, replaced the perfectly harmonized Zairean sound with a ragged assembly of rough harmonies and hard dance rhythms, propelled by a hard snare drum. The lead guitar came to the fore; Zaiko did away with the brass section, beloved of so many earlier Congolese

dance bands. Zaiko's cavacha beat chimed with President Mobutu's authenticity campaign which placed a new emphasis on traditional culture, from names to clothing and even hair styles. Musicians incorporated traditional elements into their work such as Papa Wemba, who brought the lokole or slit log drum into his band Isife Lokole in 1972.

Other musicians took different routes. Sam Mangwana, who had scandalized Kinshasa by playing both with OK Jazz and Tabu Ley (musicians traditionally stuck with one of the two main schools) left Zaire for Abidjan. It was here with his African All Stars that he created a mixture of soukous and biguine, from the Antilles, that was to revive the Zairean scene in the mid seventies. Mangwana left to work in Paris, one of a growing number of Zairean musicians seeking new outlets and better recording facilities in the French capital. The stream included Nyboma, one of the country's sweetest singers, and less well-known artists like Kanda Bongo Man, who have now established themselves in Europe. Others, like Franco and Tabu Ley have toured America.

Zairean music has also spread widely through Africa. The early acoustic musicians, like Bosco, were well known, records like 'Masanga' exciting listeners from Zambia to Sierra Leone and across to Kenya, where local acoustic guitarists adopted the Congolese guitar styles. The later electric bands were equally popular, their work dispersed through radio, record and live appearances. During the Congolese Civil War, a number of musicians left the country to settle in Kenya and Tanzania, creating a powerful new musical presence that was to stimulate local musicians into copying Congolese styles, and later develop their own Ki-Swahili versions of Congolese rumba originally sung in Lingala. The same process took place in Sierra Leone, where Ryco Jazz helped create a boom that was further fed by sensational live appearances from Dr Nico. In Zimbabwe, local bands created their own version of the rumba, a speeded up sound labelled 'sunguura'. In Nigeria, Ibo musicians mixed the highly fashionable guitar sounds with local rhythms to create a new brand of local highlife.

Fashions change rapidly in Africa. At present, a new style of music, *makossa* from Cameroon is attracting larger numbers of listeners outside Zaire. But there is little doubt that the most influential and durable form of popular urban music in Africa has been the Zairean rumba.

AFRICA IN THE MEDIA

ROBIN PALMER

ON 6 DECEMBER 1986 the African Studies Association of the United Kingdom sponsored a symposium on 'The Media and Africa since Independence: past trends and future prospects'. It was held at the Royal Commonwealth Society and attracted an audience of seventy, divided equitably between those working in the media, in academe and the less privileged.

A major objective was to bring together a range of people from diverse backgrounds who shared an interest in and concern for Africa and whose paths would not normally cross. The idea for the symposium arose directly out of a book which I had just written with the film maker Paul Harrison, called *News out of Africa* (London, 1986). This was aimed primarily at a non-academic and non-Africanist audience. It tried to show what kinds of news and images of Africa now reach the West and how these have changed over the past two decades, within the context of the profound changes which have taken place within the media itself. Many of those interviewed for our book strongly supported the idea of a symposium and so found themselves pressed into presenting papers.

In opening the meeting, I appealed for a genuine participatory democracy rather than the sterile, ritualized ping-pong of questions from the floor and answers from the table. This appeal seemed to work and the day was indeed characterized by lively, varied debates which followed on the brief presentation of nine papers.

The first session featured 'Radio and the Press', both still more dominant in Africa than elsewhere. Angus McDermid, whose distinctive voice became familiar to millions of listeners to the World Service, spoke about his long career in BBC Radio News during which he had covered Central, East, West and Southern Africa from 1959 to 1972. A salutary experience had been hearing his own words rebroadcast in West Africa a few minutes after they had first been heard in London; few newspaper correspondents have their material scrutinized in such a way. McDermid was generally given a fairly free hand as regards travel, and the cost-effectiveness of his wanderings was never questioned as long as he produced his daily despatches. From most African capitals it was possible, given advance warning, to connect a studio up to London via short wave. But the results were not always satisfactory, and so it was often necessary to supplement voiced reports with telexes or cables. In those days television film had to be air-freighted to London, so that news pictures were always at least a day old when they reached the screen. In recent years, McDermid noted, the advent of

lightweight ENG (Electronic News Gathering) equipment, used in conjunction with satellite ground stations, of which there are a surprising number in Africa, has had a revolutionary effect; today's riots from South Africa can be seen *today*. Moreover, the superlative quality of 'voice' on satellite transmissions has provoked an endless quest for improved voice quality from radio correspondents; crackly noises from abroad are no longer acceptable. Only very occasionally can radio correspondents justify the cost of satellite bookings, so the main emphasis has been on attachments which enhance telephone quality. This equipment works wonders, but it can be cumbersome and not all countries have telephone instruments which can easily connect up to it. He concluded by advocating that potential African correspondents should aim to stay in Africa for as long as possible, since it takes years to build up a reputation and the necessary personal contacts.

This last point was strongly endorsed by Colin Legum, formerly of *The Observer*, who has been reporting on Africa for over half a century. He spoke about the steady decline in press coverage of Africa since the 1960s, which applied to both the serious and the tabloid papers. This was part of a general reduction in coverage of all foreign news, which tended to be the first to suffer when budgets were being cut. In 1960 there had been a dozen Africa or Commonwealth correspondents in Fleet Street. They formed an African circle, which met monthly at the Reform Club with editors and people from the BBC to discuss the most recent developments. Now, and in contrast to what had happened in France and Scandinavia, their number has diminished almost to zero and in consequence the press today provides a very narrow and distorted view of Africa. The only bright spot was the recent appointment by the *Daily Telegraph* of an Africa correspondent. But more typical was the case of Paul Vallely who, in Legum's view, had done some brilliant reporting from the Horn of Africa for *The Times*, but was recalled and taken off Africa before he was able to consolidate his network of contacts.

Graham Mytton, Head of International Broadcasting and Audience Research in the BBC External Services and the author of *Mass Communication in Africa* (London, 1983), spoke about how the media in Africa were short of finance and often suffered from an excess of political and bureaucratic control. Some of the weaknesses in Western coverage of Africa stemmed, in Mytton's view, from the fact that the media in Africa itself are chronically weak and vulnerable. He cited the recent collapse of NAN, the large Nigerian national news agency, which was closing down all its overseas offices. The Ghana News Agency had done the same a few years ago and the BBC was not alone in regretting this trend, which deprived it of important alternative news sources. Such financial problems illustrated the difficulty confronting the Third World's proposed New World

Information and Communications Order (NWICO), designed to combat Western dominance of the media. Mytton also revealed that views he had expressed in *News out of Africa* had prompted controversy at the BBC. What he had said on that occasion was that whilst the External Services, and particularly the African Service, continued to regard its listeners as serious adults, domestic radio increasingly simplified and trivialised issues and did little to challenge stereotypes of Africa. Domestic radio now feeds off newspapers to an unhealthy degree and, unlike the African Service, ignores the agency tapes and the monitoring stations. Moreover, almost none of the excellent material broadcast daily by the African Service is ever heard on domestic radio. Mytton also criticized journals such as *African Affairs* for never reviewing radio and television programmes about Africa; there existed no body of critical literature on the coverage of African themes in the mass media, with the exception of a very small number of academic theses.

In the ensuing discussion it was noted that the lack of foreign exchange and the escalating cost of batteries had led to a decline in the number of functioning radios in many African countries. It was hoped that this might be remedied by the development of low cost, solar-powered radios, which had the potential to usher in a revolution as dramatic as that wrought by the transistor in the early 1960s.

Paul Harrison began the second session, on 'Independent Film Makers and Photojournalism', by lamenting the simplistic, one-sided and Eurocentric picture of Africa drawn in so much of the Western media. Independent film producers generally worked in either documentaries, features or news. While African film makers mainly had experience in feature production, most westerners saw Africa as a field for documentaries. The major financiers of independent documentaries were still UN agencies or commercial enterprises like Costains, which were concerned to show how well they are 'developing' Africa. There was a particular need, Harrison believed, to move away from the aid and development documentaries, which constantly portrayed Africa's underdevelopment, and to depict more of the continent's rich complexity. This should be done where possible by African film makers, for whom expense had so far been a severe handicap as they had concentrated on costly cinema film production. The equipment necessary to record pictures on Video-8 (laughed at by some, yet in use with the BBC and ITV) is now reduced to about £1000, while £4000 buys the facility to edit as well. The availability of relatively inexpensive video equipment and the coming of DBS (Direct Broadcast by Satellite), with its much larger and more varied TV markets, ought to open new doors to the next generation of independent film makers throughout the world.

Robert Papstein, who teaches African history at the Free University of Amsterdam and also works as a photojournalist for Sipa Press in Paris,

provided a brief history of magazine photojournalism. It began in Europe in the 1930s as a revolutionary idea, the first deviation from traditional text-based journalism. It was made possible by technological improvements in cheap, high quality printing and the development of small Leica cameras using 35 mm motion picture film which could take pictures unobtrusively, often without flash, in places never photographed before. Photojournalism reached its apogee in the 1940s and 1950s with the American *Life* magazine. Its photographers were given weeks, sometimes months, to work on stories, compared to only a few days now. Photographic essays combine the self-evident with ambiguity; we still find it harder to 'read' photographs than text. In Vietnam, the first televised war, photojournalists portrayed for the first time, and increasingly in colour, shatteringly violent and horrific images of war. Since then the emphasis has increasingly been on the sensational, on the slap-in-the-face single image rather than the photographic essay. Vietnam seemed to establish the superiority of television over still photography; *Life* collapsed and photojournalism appeared at an end as more and more photographers turned to film and later video. But television and photojournalism are more complementary than was once believed. Papstein's abiding images of the Vietnam War was not the thousands of feet of television film he saw, but two still photographs. We can 'read' these at our own pace and ponder their reality and ambiguity in a way that film, flashing by at 25 frames a second, does not allow.

Turning to Africa, Papstein argued that as news agencies, newspapers and broadcasting organizations have reduced their number of resident staff correspondents there, so photographs have come to play a larger role in 'explaining' Africa to newspaper and magazine readers. He retold the story of Tony Suau, the young *Denver Post* photographer, who flew out to film the Ethiopian famine, with his own money and in the face of editorial disapproval, a year before the story broke in the West. Few people were interested in the photographs he brought back; it was only when the Amin/Buerk film was shown a year later that Suau's photographs were remembered and he won a Pulitzer prize.

The third session, on 'Television', was opened by Peter Gill of Thames Television's *This Week* programme. He contrasted the film he made of the Ethiopian famine in October 1984, called *Bitter Harvest*, with Jonathan Dimpleby's famous 1973 film, *The Unknown Famine*. Whilst it was possible for Dimpleby's film to be devoid of political message, current affairs producers now require some definite angle. The point of Gill's film was to contrast record grain surpluses in Europe with famine conditions in Africa, and so to scratch the surface of larger arguments relating to aid and surpluses. The fact that very little justice could be done to the complexities of the Western aid scandal in Ethiopia in the course of a 30-minute

documentary led Gill to take time off, grudgingly given by Thames, to write a book on the subject: *A Year in the Death of Africa* (London, 1986). Gill did not subscribe to current optimistic views about television coverage of Third World issues; rather he believes that television is continuing to fail Africa and to disappoint the growing number of viewers who want to learn more, but are not getting the coverage they deserve. He concluded with a warning:

Having brought hunger and poverty in Africa and the Third World into people's living rooms and back into the political agenda, television journalism may now be failing in its duty to educate as well as inform. There has been too much coverage that has been stuck in the rut of the merely emotive, and not enough that goes to the political point. We tend to foist our own European perspectives onto the Third World and fail adequately to explore our own First World responsibilities for hunger and poverty. After the Band Aid phenomenon, there is surely an historic opportunity for the media in the West to educate and inform people about the political mechanisms that sustain poverty in such a way that the issue remains on the agenda until effective solutions are adopted. This window will not remain open for long because the public will not remain receptive to this sort of education for long. A text has just been brilliantly provided by Oxfam's *For Richer for Poorer*. How are we going to get that information accepted as part of everyday political currency?

This pessimistic view was strongly endorsed by John Coker, a producer for BBC TV Current Affairs, who has been making films in Africa for over a decade. It now costs about £80,000 to send a documentary film crew out to Africa, which was a major reason why *Panorama* would only go there twice on average during its 38-week year. Costs could be reduced by taking a smaller crew, by relying more on local people and so forth. In discussion, Peter Gill painted a somewhat brighter picture; of the first 11 of Thames' revived *This Week* documentaries, four had featured Africa. But Coker's most recent news was appalling; he had been informed by a top BBC TV Current Affairs executive that 'Africa is no longer of any significance' and so it would seem likely that, for the moment at least, the BBC will not be responding positively to Peter Gill's challenge.

The third pessimistic voice to be heard from television was that of Kevin Hamilton, Managing Editor of Visnews. His organisation and WTN are the two London-based international television news agencies which daily gather and disseminate news by satellite all over the world. To date in 1986, of 878 stories which Visnews had collected from Africa, a mere 11 had been taken by the West European networks. (Visnews also filed 13 stories

on the Ethiopian famine between March 1983 and October 1984, not one of which was used in Europe or North America.) Hamilton believed that Western television had done almost nothing to enhance understanding of Black Africa since 1960 and indeed had done great harm. Its aims and *modus operandi* were totally incompatible with the realities of life in post-colonial Africa. Until Gary Strieker opened a bureau for CNN (Cable News Network) in Nairobi recently, there had not been a single staff correspondent or cameraman from a British or American television network resident in Black Africa, though all are present in South Africa. In Europe and North America major politicians have a posse of television news people camped on their doorsteps year round and so their words are instantly recorded. Hamilton contrasted this with the very different situation in Africa, of whose politicians we hear very little and where the stories we do hear tend only to be of disasters, famines or visits by British royalty. The Western media had looked forward to a racial bloodbath once Rhodesia became Zimbabwe. When this did not happen, the journalists all left and so people in the West have learned almost nothing of Zimbabwe's post-independence achievements from television.

In discussion it was noted that, while an effective minimum crew for a news story was only three with four for a documentary, union rules at Thames demanded a full crew of nine on most assignments. Until recently all nine travelled first class; this meant that in eight years the *TV Eye* team could never travel further east than Pakistan. Peter Gill flatly refused to take a full crew to the Ethiopian famine in 1984; he declared it a war zone which implied a 'short crew'. Union restrictions also block the use of modern technology in most commercial television documentaries and were the main reason why Mohamed Amin of Visnews was not initially credited with filming the famous October 1984 Ethiopian famine film shown on BBC TV News. The film's subsequent impact, we were told, surprised television executives as much as everyone else.

The fourth and final session, on 'Whither Africa and the Media?', centred on a paper by myself, an expanded version of which was published as 'Out of Africa, out of focus' in the *Times Higher Education Supplement* on 13 December 1986. I argued that one of the paradoxes of modern mass communications is that, while there exists the potential for us all to be more informed about the world than ever before, the reality is that very often we are not. Television companies are anxious to preserve the illusion that they have a network of correspondents littered across the globe eager to bring us today's news the moment it breaks. In reality the easy availability of satellite technology, combined with the escalating cost of maintaining foreign correspondents and camera crew abroad, has meant a reduction in their number. ITN currently has only three resident foreign staff correspondents covering the entire world; two in Washington and one in

Johannesburg. The BBC duplicates this exactly, whilst also having their man in Moscow, the Middle East and the Far East. As a result, they are both heavily reliant for foreign news on the agencies—Visnews and WTN.

In Britain the past two decades have witnessed a progressive decline in the quality of newspaper and, to a lesser degree, radio journalism in the serious coverage of all foreign news, including Africa. Television coverage of the continent (apart from South Africa) has, with the major exception of documentaries, also tended to diminish since 1960. Reporters have been fire-brigaded out to cover Idi Amin atrocity stories, the coronation of 'Emperor' Bokassa, civil war in Rhodesia and famines in the Horn of Africa. But only the spectacular, the bizarre or the truly horrific tend to reach our screens, thus reinforcing stereotypes of Africa and Africans. We now receive no regular political or economic television news coverage of day to day life in Africa, so that those who do not listen to BBC World Service broadcasts have no context in which to place the exceptional stories which break from time to time. We thus have the irony, in our supposedly global village world, that a teacher in an African bush school who listens to the World Service news will be far better informed about the world than people in Britain who take their news entirely from television. This decline in information is reciprocal, for, as Western newspaper and television coverage of Africa as a whole has decreased, so African media coverage of the rest of the world, never extensive, has also diminished. In a world of satellite technology, this seems patently absurd.

The symposium ended with a call (subsequently heeded) to establish a small monitoring group of Africanists, since the BBC and ITV companies have historically been more responsive to pressures from outside than from within. It was stressed that such a group should set itself clear, limited and realistic targets and should be authoritative, impartial and knowledgeable. This was one positive consequence—among many less tangible—of what by common consent was a most enjoyable and fruitful gathering.

NOTES AND NEWS

Royal African Society

The Royal African Society continued to hold meetings during the first three months of 1987. The following meetings took place:

- 5 February Richard Hodder-Williams (Joint Editor, *African Affairs*) in Birmingham on 'Can academics contribute to development in Africa?'
- 27 February Mohamed Amin (Head of the Africa Bureau, VisNews) and Ian Lindsay-Smith (Executive Editor, *The Observer*) in London on 'Death on camera: the role and responsibility of the media in third world disasters'
- 2 March Major-General Joseph Garba (Chairman, UN Special Committee against Apartheid) in London on 'The role of the UK for freedom and national liberation in South Africa'
- 25 March Lord Gifford (Chairman, Committee for Freedom of Mozambique) in London on 'Famine in Mozambique'
- 25 March Lucy Duran (British Library Sound Archive) in Bristol on 'The role of the Jali in present day Manding society'

The Society decided last year to donate back numbers of *African Affairs* to a large number of African libraries whose finances made the purchase of the *Journal* very difficult. The first parcel, to Makerere University in Uganda, has already been despatched. Support from the British Council will enable the remainder of the donations to be sent on their way within the next few months.

The Society, through its Charitable Trust, contributed substantially to the publication of *A Directory of Africanists in Britain* and this volume, edited by Richard Hodder-Williams and covering 443 individuals, has now been published by the University of Bristol Press, 12 Priory Road, Bristol BS8 1TU, from whom copies may be purchased. A leaflet is included in the *Journal*. Plans are being made for an updated and enlarged edition; anybody who is omitted and would like to be included in a second edition should contact the editor directly.

Standing Conference on Library Materials of Africa: Silver Jubilee Conference, 14-15 May 1987

SCOLMA's Silver Jubilee Conference will be held at the School of Oriental and African Studies, Malet Street, London WC1 from 14 to 15 May. The keynote address will be given by Rt Hon Timothy Raison MP and papers will be presented on 'African language studies and the Parker report', 'Development and underdevelopment in the study of African

modern history and politics', 'African literature: a brave new world', 'Popular music and drama: a new field', 'African radio and TV as information sources', 'Resourcing beyond the page: the audiovisual record', 'Overviews of African archaeology', 'Applications of science and technology', 'Agricultural data bases and agricultural development', 'Micros, megabytes and medicine: the control of health care literature', 'African studies in Africa, the United States and Europe'. For full details contact: SCOLMA Secretary, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 27-8 Russell Square, London WC1.

George Shepperson Conference in Commonwealth and American History: the making of Constitutions and the development of national identity. Edinburgh, 3-6 July 1987

In 1987, the bicentennial of the Constitution of the United States, the Department of History of the University of Edinburgh is organising a major international conference in honour of one of its own celebrated sons, Professor George Shepperson, who recently retired from the Chair of Commonwealth and American History there. The conference will take as its theme 'The Making of Constitutions and the Development of National Identity'. Two distinguished authorities on the history of the American constitution, Gordon Wood and Gary Wills, will be amongst the speakers. Wood will look at the 1787 Constitution chiefly in its domestic context; Wills will concentrate on the Trans-Atlantic dimension, particularly Scottish influences. They will be joined by a number of distinguished historians of the USA from this country, including Professor Peter Parish, Director of the Institute of US Studies at the University of London, who will speak on the Constitution of the Confederacy.

As befits an occasion honouring Professor Shepperson, whose work did much to further the study not only of American but of Commonwealth, African and other non-European fields in this country, the conference theme will range far beyond the United States. Canada will be strongly represented (with papers from Dr Robert Perin, Professor Peter Marshall and Dr Ged Martin), as will Africa, Professor Shepperson's spiritual home, and other regions of the Commonwealth and the wider world.

The conference is being organised by Dr Tom Barron, Mr Owen Dudley Edwards and Miss Pat Storey. It will run from Friday 3 July to Monday 6 July 1987. Anyone interested in attending is invited to write to Tom Barron, History Department, William Robertson Building, George Square, Edinburgh EH8 9JY.

Canadian Journal of African Studies: special issue on the Study of African Women: the state of the art

The editors of this journal are particularly interested in papers that deal with theoretical problems, development issues, and advances in this field

since the Journal's special 1972 issue on African Women. Manuscripts should be submitted by 1 September to one of the editors: Harriet Lyons, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3C5 or Audrey Wipper, Department of Sociology, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3G1. Abstracts, papers, suggested topics, research notes and book reviews are all welcomed.

**Sixth International Oral History Conference: 'Myth and History'.
Oxford, 11-13 September 1987**

This Conference, which forms part of an Oral History Festival, will be held at St John's College and in the Taylorian Institute. The programme includes sessions on oral tradition; myth, ritual and prophesy; myth and reality in life stories; family myth and tradition; collective memory: rural, urban and labour; national identity and popular myth; war and resistance; memory and denunciation; struggles for freedom in Latin America and the Caribbean; the student movement in the sixties; images and consciousness of women; psychoanalysis and memory. For full details, contact Robert King, History Workshop Centre for Social History, Ruskin College, Oxford OX1 2HE (Tel: 0865: 56041).

Report on ASAUK Conference, September 1986: Africa and the wider world

A quarter of a century after decolonisation the world perception of Africa is very different from that of 1960. The African Studies Association brought together some one hundred and forty people to look at these perceptions and discuss a couple of dozen scholarly papers on many aspects of the theme. They came from Africa itself, from mainland Europe, from Scandinavia and America, from Australia even, to share ideas about the current scenes of transformation. They met at the University of Kent where African studies are particularly associated with the fields of literature and drama. This proved an appropriate focus in the year which was soon to see the award of the Nobel prize for literature to the Nigerian dramatist Wole Soyinka.

Oral literature naturally features centrally in the culture of Africa. At the contemporary level it does so particularly in societies such as South Africa where the written word is subject to censorship but oral presentation—poetic or dramatic—can thrive less hindered. In much of Africa the oral proliferation of dramatic literature grows from a deeper cultural tradition and meets the demand of a society where literacy is confined to the needs of employment rather than to entertainment. The symbolic significance of

epic narrative can also be traced back to earlier generations by the careful decoding of the written works of literate visitors, thus opening up a fruitful field of combined literacy and historical studies.

Music was found to open up a rich new vein of scholarly enquiry into the post-colonial blossoming of African culture, and one which scholars seem to have neglected hitherto. New instruments, new recording techniques, new sophistication in marketing, have led to an explosion of musical talent which has not only spread within Africa but has also been carried to the American and European worlds. The orchestras of the great throbbing cities of Zaire were particularly successful, while the older musical traditions of Ghana continued to evolve despite the constraints of economic recession.

Towns are where the new music is heard, and towns form the focus of much of the new dynamic of change in Africa. In South Africa the new towns of Kwandebele are purpose-built commuter slums to serve the labour needs of Pretoria while removing blacks from the white heartland. The rivalry, the violence, the exhaustion, the neglect, the poverty are built into the policy of displacement. But in the rest of Africa the town is the magnet and proper understanding of urban sociology is central to the understanding of Africa's people today.

Women also move to the towns in their search for economic niches, for footholds in the male-dominated world of politics, for security is a scene of changing mores and interpersonal exploitation, for education as the route out of poverty and oppression. The study of women sheds a powerful light far beyond the confines of the case studies themselves. Women also find new roles in the countryside when men gain preferential access to the innovative opportunities presented by the post-colonial state structures. The change from specialist corners of the foraging economy to a managerial role in farming may help improve the level of family nutrition.

Nutrition becomes a key question in areas of famine, whether it be of man-made or climatic origin. The world outside continues to see hunger as the hallmark of Africa's underdevelopment and will continue to do so long after food self-sufficiency has been restored. For years new realities will have to be fed into the cumbersome awareness of international and domestic planning machineries. Economics seem particularly prone to capture by ideology and impervious to the rapidly changing straws of evidence that blow in the wind. The field is one in which the protection of academic freedoms, the asking of uncomfortable questions, the exploring of unpopular political options, remain particularly necessary in Africa and in the centres of African studies.

The nature and role of the post-colonial state is central to the wider world's perceptions of Africa. Myths abound in the media, fuelled by unsavoury cases of despotic rule. Realistic studies which can reach a broad audience uncluttered by romantic post-imperial expectations and freed from

over-sophisticated terminology have yet to make their impact. But if famine is man-made, we need to understand the legacies with which the state is encumbered and see what realistic options for decision making it enjoys.

One government peculiarly caught in its own immobilising web is the government of South Africa. To the wider world South Africa has moved from the African margin to the centre stage in twenty-five years. The search for expedient compromises to limit the revolutionary demands of urban blacks only heightens the risk of unrest among rural whites. Protests from industry at the cost of repression are silenced as the military quietly move into the decision-making seats and roll their armoured vehicles into towns where the police and their auxiliaries can no longer hold out. Censorship and propaganda become key tools of survival.

Propaganda is not new in Africa and already in the inter-war years colonial governments tried to seek legitimacy by means of cin   film. Loyalty to the white man was a more important message than practical education, never more so than when black support was needed in war. The most dramatic reels shown to the Africanists at Canterbury were those spliced together in the 'Lion of Judah', showing both the Ethiopian and the Italian perceptions of the invasion of 1935. But the African film industry has remained small and its sharpest insights have come from those who all too uncomfortably understand the searing pain caused by unreconciled loyalties in a post-colonial era, caught betwixt Africa and the wider world.

DAVID BIRMINGHAM

ASAUK Silver Jubilee Conference, Cambridge 14-16 September 1988

The African Studies Association of the UK was inaugurated at a meeting held at the Commonwealth Institute on 3 July 1963. The next biennial Conference, which is due in September 1988, will therefore be used to mark the Silver Jubilee of the Association.

Through the good offices of the African Studies Centre of the University of Cambridge, this conference will be held at Newnham College, Cambridge, on 14-16 September 1988.

The format will be similar to that used successfully at York in 1984 and Canterbury in 1986. There will be two or, possibly, three panels meeting during each Conference session except the last. At each panel two or three papers will be presented and discussed; presentations will be brief, since duplicated copies of the papers will be available at the beginning of the Conference. The final session, which will include the presidential address, will be plenary and will be followed by the AGM.

Members of the Association's Council have recruited contributors of papers to earlier Conferences. On this occasion, a more liberal approach (the 'call for papers') is being tried, and it is for that reason that early notice of

the Conference is being given. Anyone who would like to contribute a paper, or to offer his or her services in organizing a panel, is invited to communicate with Douglas Rimmer at the Centre of West African Studies, University of Birmingham, P.O. Box 363, Birmingham B15 2TT (Tel. 021-472-1301, Ext. 2263), or with Dr Henrietta Moore at the Department of Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge, Free School Lane, Cambridge CB2 3RF (Tel. 0223-334594). No overarching theme is being used for the 1988 Conference and all subjects plausibly falling within the field of African Studies are acceptable, at least for consideration. Since there will be room in the programme for a minimum of 25 papers and a maximum of about twice that number, it is hoped that potential contributors or organizers will not hesitate to come forward.

Papers relating to the standing of tropical Africa as the largest of the 'least developed' areas of the world economy would be of particular interest for possible inclusion in the plenary session.

It appears that costs of attending the Conference at Newnham will not compare unfavourably with costs at Canterbury in 1986. The Council hopes that something may be done to lower these costs for postgraduate students and possibly some others who have unusual difficulty in meeting them. Funds for a subsidy cannot be found from within the Association but an appeal to a Foundation is being considered.

Further details about the Conference will be made available later. The purpose of the present notice is to urge members of the Association to reserve the dates and to consider actively how they might contribute to the Conference.

REVIEW ARTICLE

EARLY HISTORY, AND WHY IT MATTERS

CHRISTOPHER WRIGLEY

GENERAL AFRICANIST JOURNALS, and their readers, do not usually concern themselves with the remoter regions of the continent's past. Even historians have generally taken the iron age as the limit of their serious interest, perhaps peering beyond it at the rock paintings of the latest stone age or the beginnings of food production in the Sudan, but content to leave the preceding two million years as the exclusive preserve of the archaeologist and the palaeontologist. Up to a point this division of labour is inevitable. The investigation of ancient remains is a formidably difficult business, calling for mastery of an ever-expanding battery of scientific techniques, and those who practise it necessarily form a distinct occupational caste. Yet what is commonly called 'prehistory' is of the greatest importance to us all, because it contains the larger part, and the formative part, of the human experience; and to divide the study of the human past into two segregated territories, defined by the nature of the evidence used, is wrong in principle and disastrous in practice. It is bad enough that Julius Caesar, being literate, should be deemed to be part of British history while the makers of Avebury and Stonehenge are consigned to a mysterious prologue, the domain of technical specialists. But to Africa the consequences of this academic apartheid are worse, in that its documented history consists largely of the period in which it has been subordinated to outsiders. That period is only a small fraction of its actual past, which needs to be seen entire if it is to be properly understood.

Until recently there has been good excuse for the neglect of Africa's earlier history, because it has seemed both obscure and doubtfully relevant. The African hominids of the Pliocene and Lower Pleistocene epochs, on whom most of the research effort was directed, were everyone's ancestors, not the exclusive property of Africa. And between these and the Pharaohs there lay a vast wilderness littered with chipped stones, to which constantly changing, and to the layman meaningless, labels were attached. During the last twenty years, however, there has been a great advance in the understanding of this immense dark age, and with this has come a radical re-assessment of Africa's role in human history, and thus of human history itself. It behoves all historians and all Africanists to be cognisant of this revision. It is thus unfortunate that the recently published first volumes of the Cambridge and Unesco Histories were not quite as helpful as they might have been.¹

1. J. D. Clarke, (ed.), *Cambridge History of Africa*, vol. I (Cambridge, 1982); Joseph Ki-Zerbo, (ed.), *General History of Africa*, vol. I (Paris, 1981).

This is surprising, for the distinguished archaeologists who contributed to the Cambridge volume, especially, have always been aware that their work, for all its technicality, has a historical purpose. Perhaps they were inhibited by the format of a Cambridge History, with its supposed demand for caution and consensus. At any rate their conducted tours of the sites, region by region, did not really convey the excitement of recent discovery and debate in their field, nor did they give a clear statement of what is at issue, for Africa in particular and humanity in general. And that goes too for the parallel Unesco volume, which has been located near the far end of the scale that runs 'from extreme Europocentrism to ardent demonstration of African achievement'.² For whatever may be thought of the programmatic chapters in that volume, the prehistory chapters, written by senior French and British scholars, were if anything more conservative than their Cambridge counterparts.

Here perhaps we can identify the main impediment: the fear of being suspected of beating the drum for Africa, or for anything else. The most frustrating item in either volume is the Cambridge chapter by Clark Howell on 'The Origins and Evolution of African *Hominidae*', which was a version of an essay composed in the first place for a volume on the history of animals, and thus tailored to the interests, not of historians, but of zoologists.³ Such people are apt to be scathing about 'the antics of emotionally charged hominologists'⁴; and so Howell turned a discussion of human evolution, the most fascinating subject there is, into a scholastic exercise in taxonomy, announcing at the beginning that speculations about behaviour would be eschewed. At which one feels impelled to ask: 'Can these bones live?' For, if not, they would be more use as fertiliser.

The illusion, persistent among scientists, that it is possible to study the human past *without* emotion or preconception has been discarded long ago by historians. And so I must declare a double interest: firstly as a human being (*Homo sapiens* Linnaeus 1758 or perhaps merely one of Howell's *Hominidae* *gen. et sp. indet.*) and secondly as a student, sometime resident and partisan of Africa.

Many historians of Africa believe that it is unnecessary, as well as unseemly, to be a partisan, since the 'demonstration of African achievement', an acknowledged function of historical studies in the 1950s and 1960s, has now been accomplished, and nationalist historiography should give way to other kinds of analysis. But this, I believe, is too optimistic a view. The dynamic character of Africa's past may have been established to our own satisfaction, but the general image of that past is still very much what it was a quarter of a century ago, and it has been sustained by textbooks

2. Thurstan Shaw, 'Review', *Journal of African History*, 24 (1983), p. 106.

3. F. C. Howell, 'Hominidae', in V. J. Maglio and H. B. S. Cooke, (eds.), *Evolution of African mammals* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978), pp. 154-248.

4. R. J. G. Savage in A. Morley Davies, (ed.), *Tertiary Faunas*, vol. I (London, 1971), p. 503.

of prehistory and human evolution that have a much wider influence than anything written by African specialists, whose criticism made little impact because it was focussed too exclusively on recent epochs and on political issues. For example, nationalist and liberal academics devoted much energy to the destruction of the notorious 'Hamitic hypothesis', but their fire was directed mainly against that part of it which purported to explain the origin of states. For obvious reasons of contemporary politics it was thought essential to show that the kingdoms found in pre-colonial Black Africa were the result of local enterprise and not of conquest by people who were in some sense not really African. Since there were few signs of state-building south of the Sahara before the Iron Age, and not many before the Later Iron Age, the argument could be confined, as historians preferred to confine it, within the last one or two millennia. Colonialist writers, however, had pictured Hamitic or similar influences operating on an otherwise inert Africa from very much remoter times. Sir Harry Johnston, for example, believed that the Negroes migrated into Africa from southern Asia about fifty thousand years ago and then 'stagnated in utter isolation and savagery' until, somewhere between ten and thirty thousand years ago, the white man, 'the world's redeemer', began to filter into the continent, contributing the rudiments of economic and cultural life and also improving the natives by an infusion of 'Caucasian blood'.⁵

It would be easy to dismiss Johnston as a pre-archaeological amateur whose biological approach to history, though orthodox at the time, has long been discredited. Yet in substance the statements made about the African past by eminent authorities half a century later were not very different from his. There had, it is true, been one important change: it had come to be accepted that Africa had been continuously inhabited from the beginning of human times, however the word 'human' might be defined. But it was also believed that it had been out of the mainstream of progress for at least 40,000 years and probably for much longer than that. To explain how that belief became established we must first sketch the orthodox picture of human cultural development.

For some time now it has been generally, though not universally, accepted that the first creatures to cross the human threshold, systematically making tools and developing an electronic apparatus more complex than that of any ape, lived in East Africa about two million years ago. That region also saw the creation of the first standardised tool, the Acheulian 'hand axe', about half a million years later. The most plausible explanation of this object is that it was a missile, shaped for aerodynamic efficiency as well cutting impact.⁶ Whatever its purpose, the design was so successful that it

5. H. H. Johnston, *The Opening Up of Africa* (London, 1911), p. 25.

6. Eileen M. O'Brien, 'The Projectile Capabilities of an Acheulian Handaxe from Olorgesailie', *Current Anthropology*, 22 (1981), pp. 76-9.

continued in use for about one and a half million years, during which time it spread over most of the Old World. If it was indeed a weapon, then its eventual disappearance, which marks the end of the Lower Palaeolithic, must mean that it had been superseded by a better one. And in fact the Middle Palaeolithic, beginning about 100,000 years ago, is defined above all by the production of more or less triangular stone points, which were presumably attached to wooden shafts. The manufacture of such spearheads, and of other Middle Palaeolithic innovations, was made possible by a technical advance achieved some time earlier. This was the invention of the Levallois method, in which stones were prepared by a series of small blows, so that the decisive stroke detached a flake of predetermined size and shape. That development was doubly significant: it made for much more precision and variety in the available implements, and it bore witness to a fully human capacity for planning and design.

Homo sapiens, in other words, had arrived, and there are a number of skulls from the latter part of the Middle Pleistocene (roughly from 400,000 to 100,000 years ago) to prove it. 'Sapient', however, is not the same as 'modern', and much had to happen before people entirely like ourselves could make their appearance. In Europe, indeed, and to some extent in western Asia and North Africa, the trend during the early Upper Pleistocene (from about 120,000 to 40,000 years ago) was in some respects away from the modern norm. This, the age of Middle Palaeolithic technology, was also the age of Neanderthal Man, whose massive browridges, chinless but protruding jaw and general heaviness of bone made him look something less than human, even though his brain-case was at least as large as ours and he did human things like burying his dead and even strewing flowers over them.

In these parts of the world, and especially in Europe, a dramatic change took place between forty and thirty thousand years ago, when Neanderthals were succeeded by people hardly distinguishable from the modern inhabitants. More or less at the same time (the 'more or less' is still fiercely debated) the 'Mousterian' equipment of the Middle Palaeolithic gave way to a toolkit of a new kind, the technical basis of which was the production of 'blades'. Long, narrow flakes had occurred in earlier contexts, but they were now more frequent and their manufacture is thought to have been improved by the use of a punch. Moreover they were now more systematically worked over so that they could serve specific functions, as projectile points or as knives and chisels, which in turn were used to shape and sharpen implements of bone and wood. The production process, in short, became more elaborate and the end products more diverse. There followed the famous succession of the European Upper Palaeolithic cultures—Aurignacian, Solutrean, Gravettian, Magdalenian—which flowered in the splendours of Lascaux and Altamira. The Magdalenian disappeared with the ending of the Ice Age and the northward migration of the reindeer, and

now, from about 10,000 BC, all over western Europe and the Mediterranean lands, there were Mesolithic (or Epi-Palaeolithic) cultures characterised by intensive gathering and fishing as well as hunting with the bow. The typical stone implements of this early post-Pleistocene period were microliths, slivers of stone clearly meant to be set in wood or bone as points and barbs for arrows, teeth for saws and sickles and the like. This 'middle stone' phase was generally a fairly brief interlude between the Old Stone Age and the coming of the Neolithic, which signalled the rise of agricultural civilisation.

When serious archaeologists got to work in South Africa in the 1920s they found that their data did not fit into this scheme, which had been derived from European and Middle Eastern materials. Not only was there no Neolithic but there appeared to be no Upper Palaeolithic either. When blades appeared, they were already microlithic in character and associated with a life-style similar to that of the modern San. They therefore devised a new terminology, which was later applied to the whole of sub-Saharan Africa. The microliths were assigned to a 'Later Stone Age', handaxes and other more primitive artefacts to an 'Earlier Stone Age'; and between these, naturally called 'Middle Stone Age', were various collections, often including stone points and scrapers of a kind associated in Europe with the Neanderthals.⁷ At first the succession was entirely dateless, but before long the South Africans convinced themselves by geological reasoning that the Middle as well as the Later Stone Age materials belonged to the Holocene or Recent epoch, beginning only 10–12,000 years ago. They were thus 'mesolithic' in date as well as by etymology, yet apparently only Middle Palaeolithic in type. And so an immense time-lag opened up between the cultural evolution of sub-Saharan Africa and the lands to the north.

After the war the gap was significantly narrowed. Desmond Clark's work in Somalia and Zambia during the 1940s pushed Middle Stone Age industries back into the Pleistocene, and he also secured recognition for 'intermediate' cultural phases preceding and following them.⁸ In 1946 Gertrude Caton Thompson drew attention to the Aterian complex, which flourished in north-west Africa during the Late Pleistocene and which included tanged points, the first properly hafted spear-heads and perhaps the first arrow-heads as well.⁹ What is more, she looked southward for the Aterian inspiration, suggesting that it drew on a central African reservoir of precocious technical accomplishment. Back in the 1930s, moreover, Louis

7. A. J. H. Goodwin and C. van Riet Lowe, *The Stone Age Cultures of South Africa* (Edinburgh, 1929).

8. J. D. Clark, *The Prehistoric Cultures of the Horn of Africa* (Cambridge, 1955); *The Stone Age Cultures of Northern Rhodesia* (Claremont, 1950). Compare also the same author's *The Prehistory of Southern Africa* (Harmondsworth 1959).

9. *The Aterian Culture: its place and significance in the Palaeolithic World* (London: 1946).

Leakey had claimed that blade industries of Upper Palaeolithic I type did occur in part of East Africa, and he now won acceptance for a chronological scheme that would make them contemporary with the Aurignacian of Europe, or even earlier.¹⁰

At this stage, then, there was no disposition to believe in a longstanding African retardation. It was, strangely enough, in the 1950s and the early 1960s, while historians and nationalists were celebrating Africa's recent achievements, that a contrary conviction took hold of their archaeological colleagues. Leakey's 'Aurignacian' was dismissed from the Pleistocene and renamed 'Kenya Capsian', in the belief that its real affinities were with a mesolithic industry that flourished in the Maghreb around 6,000 BC. And a consensus emerged that the Middle Stone Age in Africa did not begin until 30,000 or 40,000 years ago, when the comparable Middle Palaeolithic of Europe was coming to an end. And so it appeared that cultural, and by implication biological, evolution in sub-Saharan Africa was a whole stage 'behind'. In 1958 one of the leading African specialists, Desmond Clark, having asserted the continent's progressive character up to about 50,000 years ago, felt bound to say that 'from this time forward the men in Africa began to lag behind Europe and Asia in cultural and mental development'.¹¹ Leakey himself was taking a similar position; and if this was the view of regional experts it was hardly surprising that scholars based in Europe and America should have virtually written Africa out of later prehistory.

Some indeed went much further than Clark or Leakey. In Carleton S. Coon's widely acclaimed *Origin of Races*, published in 1962, we read that 'if Africa was the cradle of mankind, it was only an indifferent kindergarten; Europe and Asia were our principal schools'. We also learn that Caucasoids invaded North Africa at the end of the Pleistocene and drove out the Capoids (Khoisan types), who fled towards the south. There they entered an underpopulated area inhabited by human beings of a lower evolutionary grade, who 'were related to the ancestors of the Negroes and Pygmies'.¹² Coon was a racist—or, as an otherwise friendly obituarist put it, he 'espoused an ancient Aristotelian doctrine of linear rank in at least some domains of the living world, notably human races'.¹³ He believed that five subspecies of man—Caucasoid, Mongoloid, Australoid, Capoid and Congoid—had evolved separately from the beginning, and that,

10. L. S. B. Leakey, *Stone Age Africa* (London, 1936), pp. 56–62.

11. J. D. Clark, 'Early man in Africa', *Scientific American*, 199 (1958), pp. 77–83. However, this judgement was contradicted, at least so far as mental development was concerned, in his 'Prehistoric origins of African culture', *Journal of African History*, 5 (1964), pp. 163–82.

12. C. S. Coon, *The Origin of Races* (New York, 1962), pp. 656, 390.

13. E. E. Hunt, Jr., 'Obituary', *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, 58 (1982), pp. 239–41.

although all eventually crossed the *sapiens* threshold, some did so much more recently and decisively than others.¹⁴

Nor was this the last defence of a dying doctrine. In 1969 a German scholar assured a high-level conference that 'the differences in evolutionary level of recent races are nearly as great as in Upper Pleistocene men of different countries'; Australians were on the same level as Neanderthals, Africans rather higher up, midway between Neanderthal and Cromagnon.¹⁵ As recently as 1978 the reputable *Journal of Human Evolution* published an article in which Africans appeared to be denied membership of the *sapiens* species, since it claimed that the australopithecines were succeeded by *Homo afer akkalis* (the Pygmies) and *Homo hottentottus*, Negroes being probably hybrids of *Homo afer* and *Homo erectus*.¹⁶ That was eccentric, but some authorities still reserve the subspecies term *Homo sapiens sapiens* ('Really Intelligent Man') for Caucasians.

What is more disturbing is that conclusions with similar implications were arrived at by scholars who started from quite different premisses. C. Loring Brace is a distinguished member of the liberal school of American physical anthropology, combining a belief in polycentric evolution similar to Coon's with the assertion of human equality; similarity of selective forces, cultural diffusion and some gene flow have combined to keep the regional branches of mankind in long-term parity of development. But he has been above all the champion of the European Neanderthals, whose Mousterian culture, beginning about 100,000 years ago, he took to represent a crucial breakthrough. This led him to maintain, in 1979, that 'accident of circumstances gave the inhabitants of the area from Europe through the Middle East a technological head start over the other peoples of the world, and with many modifications the effect of this fortuitous set of events continues to the present day'.¹⁷

Most British prehistorians, by contrast, subscribe to the theory of delayed monogenesis. That is, they take the decisive event in prehistory to be the appearance of the Upper (or Advanced) Palaeolithic complex, the work of Modern Man, *Homo sapiens sapiens*, who emerged about 40,000 years ago and spread over the world, sweeping the Neanderthals and other archaic populations into the dustbin of evolution. The newcomers are thought to have brought not only a more varied and efficient toolkit but also such crucial elements of full humanity as art, religion, culture (in the sense of distinct ethnic traditions), kinship systems and (many now believe) language. In

14. Coon, *The Origin of Races*, pp. ix, 3-4, 487, 600, 630. Cf. Richard Carrington, *A Million Years of Man* (London, 1963): 'Without drawing any rash conclusions about inborn racial talent, it does seem likely that the Caucasians were the first *sapiens* stock to show an advanced degree of mental ability'.

15. H. Hemmer, in F. Bordes, (ed.), *The Origin of Homo Sapiens* (Paris, 1972), pp. 65-69.

16. Mario Picardo, 'Phenetic vs. cladistic systematics', *Journal of Human Evolution*, 7 (1978), pp. 151-58.

17. C. L. Brace, *The Stages of Human Evolution* (Englewood Cliffs, 1979), p. 89.

Grahame Clark's *World Prehistory*, published in 1961 and a standard work ever since, the revolutionary advance is located, as it was by Brace, somewhere 'between Atlantic Europe and Inner Asia', in what became 'the heartland of Old World culture', whence new genes and new knowledge flowed into less favoured regions very much as they had done in the days of Sir Harry Johnston.¹⁸ Thus in practice the disagreement between Brace and Clark is whether the supremacy of the West began 100,000 or only 40,000 years ago. Both are in a real sense more chauvinist than Coon, who did not claim overall supremacy for European man; he had admitted the Mongoloids to full equality and included most of the people of south Asia in the caucasoid category; it was only Africans and Australians who were assigned to retarded subspecies. His in fact was a white-settler anthropology, whereas Brace and Clark, in different ways, unconsciously articulate the ideas of late-colonial developers and post-colonial modernisers, assuring them that in the remote past, as now, the West had been the educators of the world, the norm to which other peoples should aspire.

In the first edition of *World Prehistory* Clark felt justified in allotting a mere five pages to developments in sub-Saharan Africa after the Lower Palaeolithic, on the ground that from then on the region had been 'by-passed by the main currents of creative change'. By 1969, when a revised edition appeared, he was aware that something had to be said about Africa's 'positive achievements'. There was Egypt, of course, and 'there are more ways of contributing to the heritage of mankind than by guiding the main lines of technical advance'. (Two cheers for those who never invented anything!) But he still insisted that during the Late Pleistocene 'much of the continent remained a kind of cultural museum';¹⁹ and the 1977 edition showed no change of basic perspective.

Now all sorts of contingent explanation can be offered for the persistence of uneven development over one or two or perhaps even ten millenia. But if the retardation has persisted for 40,000, let alone 100,000 years, the presumption has to be that some very deep-seated impediment is present. And for a continent that had been uncreative for a million years, there could hardly be any hope at all. Yet that is what some authorities have alleged. Bernard Campbell, for instance, argued in 1974 that 'the expansion of the hominid populations into temperate zones was the most significant step in the evolution of *homo*'.²⁰ Lewis Binford, pioneer of the 'New Archaeology', has still more recently proposed that hunting, and therewith the rudiments of our humanity, developed only after the radiation into Europe and Asia; early people in Africa had been, and long remained, merely scavenging animals which used hammer stones to open the bones of carcasses

18. G. Clark, *World Prehistory: an outline* (Cambridge, 1961), pp. 45–50.

19. G. Clark, *World Prehistory: a new outline* (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 181ff.

20. B. Campbell and Y. A. Cohen, (eds.), *Man in Adaptation* (Chicago, 1974), pp. 198–210.

abandoned by more efficient predators.²¹ What is more, prehistorians thought they knew what Africa's impediment was. The 'Challenge and Response' model that most of them took for granted, together with the 'Frontier' model that was part of American consciousness, offered a simple explanation: it was just because Africa was the human homeland that the people who stayed there had made so little progress. In less congenial climes there would be greater need for innovation and selective pressures would operate more strongly in favour of innovatory capacity, so that both cultural and biological evolution would be speeded up. 'The pace of evolution', wrote John Pfeiffer in 1969, 'seems to have been slower [in Africa] than in Europe, perhaps because life was so abundant. . . that survival represented far less of a challenge'.²² Such judgements, which had been a normal part of Victorian discourse on Africa, still expressed a scholarly as well as a popular consensus.

At that moment, however, the chronological construction that seemed to underpin them was about to fall into disarray, being found to contain two fundamental errors. One of these was the supposed correlation between northern ice ages and periods of high rainfall in Africa, and particularly between the final, Würm glaciation in Europe and Leakey's 'Gamblian pluvial'. It now appears that if there is any glacial-pluvial correlation it is likely to be inverse. At any rate, during large parts of the Würm, between about 60,000 and 10,000 years ago, much of Africa was extremely arid. Thus material and human remains which had been dated by their position in 'wet' or 'dry' strata are in some cases younger than was supposed but in other cases very much older. Some of Leakey's 'Gamblian' material, for example, should undoubtedly be brought down to the humid period of the early Holocene, but some of it, as we shall see, is genuinely 'Aurignacian' and very early.

The other source of error, paradoxically, was the advent of carbon dating; and it is ironic that the man who has done more than any other to put Africa on the prehistoric map should have produced the date that caused most confusion. The great excavation carried out by Desmond Clark (not to be confused with the Europeanist Grahame Clark) at Kalambo Falls in Zambia in the 1950s yielded among much else a date of $57,300 \pm 300$ years before the present for wood from an Acheulian (Earlier Stone Age) level, making it some 50,000 years younger than any similar material in Europe or Asia.

21. L. R. Binford, *Bones: ancient men and modern myths* (New York, 1981), pp. 294-6. Since Binford asserts that other interpretations 'were invented to suit the beliefs of their authors', it is fair to quote the comment of Ian Hodder ('Archaeology in 1984', *Antiquity*, 58 (1984) p. 30): 'The human past legitimated and made universal the principles of the technocratic West'. Bruce Trigger, ('Alternative Archaeologies: nationalist colonialist, imperialist', *Man*, 19 (1984) pp. 355-70) goes further, describing it as imperialistic; optimistic in the 1960s it became pessimistic in the 1970s, reflecting the insecurity of the American and other middle classes.

22. *The Emergence of Man* (New York, 1969), p. 217.

Clark reported this date to the fourth Panafrican Congress in 1959 without any fanfare, but its impact was immediate.²³ Archaeologists who had previously assumed that developments in Africa and Europe would be roughly synchronous now felt bound to accept that African technology was already backward.²⁴ Moreover there were dates of between 40,000 and 45,000 years ago at Kalambo for post-Acheulian artefacts of a kind that had been found with the famous skull of 'Rhodesian Man' at Broken Hill (Kabwe), so that he too came to be accepted as belonging to that time-span. This seemed to be confirmed by a date of 41,000 years for his South African kinsman, Saldanha (or Hopefield) Man. If such people could have been classed as 'proto-Australoids' (so Clark described them) or African Neanderthals, there would have been nothing much amiss with such a date. But to most observers 'this tired-looking peripheral survivor' (as Coon called the man of Broken Hill)²⁵ had a distinctly subhuman appearance, and, unlike the Neanderthals, he had a cranial capacity well below the modern mean. So his presence in Africa at a time when perfectly modern Cromagnons were about to appear in Europe was a gift to those inclined to see the continent as a dead end.

Now the original reading from the piece of Acheulian wood at Kalambo had been 'more than 53,000 years'; but the desire for an absolute chronology was so keen that special processes were applied to extract a positive date. In his final report in 1969 Clark made it clear that the date was a minimum, meaning that the Acheulian came to an end in Zambia *not later than* 50,000 years ago.²⁶ But by then it had been seized on by non-Africanists and made to imply that in this benighted continent the Acheulian—generally attributed to *Homo erectus*—persisted *as late as* 50,000 BC. However, it has since become accepted that after about 40,000 years (some would put the limit lower still) so little radio-active material is left that *only* a minimum date can be given; also that 'more than 40,000' does not mean 'probably 42,000 or 45,000' but is entirely indefinite. As a result the eminent palaeoanthropologist W. W. Howells was impelled to write in 1973: 'it is beginning to look as though the whole [African] sequence has been pegged to wrong dates'.²⁷ The revolution may be said to have begun with the publication in 1969 of a radiocarbon reading of 'more than 51,000 years' for a Middle Stone Age level at Bushman Rock in the Transvaal.²⁸ A few years earlier such a date, even without the 'more than', would have been

23. J. D. Clark, 'The Kalambo Falls prehistoric site: an interim report', in G. Mortelmans and J. Nenquin, (eds.), *Actes du IV^e Congrès Panafricain de Préhistoire* (Tervuren, 1962) pp. 195–99.

24. G. Mortelmans and R. Monteigne, *Actes du IV^e Congrès Panafricain*, pp. 97–126.

25. *The Origin of Races*, p. 613.

26. J. D. Clark, *The Kalambo Falls Prehistoric Site*, vol. I (Cambridge, 1969).

27. *Evolution of the Genus Homo* (Reading, Mass. and London, 1973), p. 117.

28. J. C. Vogel, 'Radiocarbon dating of Bushman Rock shelter', *South African Archaeological Bulletin*, 24 (1969) p. 56.

disbelieved—or 'placed in the suspense account', as archaeologists tactfully put it. But the time for belief had now arrived. Revill Mason, Professor of Archaeology at Witwatersrand, put it together with a similar reading from Rose Cottage, which was even more surprising because it related to material hitherto assigned to the very *end* of the Middle Stone Age. He noted that the Bushman Rock shelter had not been dug to bedrock and concluded that the Middle Stone Age probably began in South Africa as early as 100,000 years ago.²⁹

That was a bold leap, yet there were soon many archaeologists willing to follow him. In 1972 P. B. Beaumont and J. C. Vogel assembled a large number of new and revised dates to back their contention that 'Southern Africa was in the forefront of cultural invention and innovation in Middle Stone Age times (c. 100,000–35,000 BC)'.³⁰ The gist of their argument was published in *Nature* and a considerable stir was caused.³¹ There followed something like an avalanche of reinterpretation, not only in southern Africa but throughout the continent. During the 1970s every other archaeological report seemed to contain exclamations such as 'surprisingly early date' or 'astonishing evolutionary trajectories'.³² Radiocarbon readings of 40,000 years or more were regularly treated as minima and some younger readings were set aside as faulty. To fill the gap, and to supply a framework for epochs beyond the most optimistic range of radiocarbon, a battery of new dating techniques was brought into play; and though none of these is fully proven their combined impact has been impressive. By the end of the decade *most* Middle Stone Age material was being dated earlier than 60,000 years and its beginnings were approaching 200,000 years, both in southern Africa and in the north-east.³³

Within that time bracket, moreover, radical changes have been charted. Especially striking have been the fortunes of the industries known in South Africa as 'Howieson's Poort'. In the 1960s these were assigned to the 'Second Intermediate' period, between eight and twelve thousand years ago. In 1968 the South Africans were surprised to get a carbon reading of 18,740 years from the Poort itself. Ten years later apparently similar

29. R. J. Mason, 'Tentative interpretations of new radiocarbon dates...', *South African Archaeological Bulletin*, 24 (1969), pp. 57, 59.

30. *African Studies*, 31 (1972), pp. 65–90, 155–82.

31. 'Revised radiocarbon chronology for the Stone Age in South Africa', *Nature*, 237 (1973) pp. 50–51.

32. K. W. Butzer, 'Sediment stratigraphy of the Middle Stone Age sequence at Klasies River Mouth', *South African Archaeological Bulletin*, 33 (1978) pp. 141–51; K. W. Butzer, P. B. Beaumont and J. C. Vogel, 'Lithostratigraphy of Border Cave, Kwa Zulu', *Journal of Archaeological Science*, 5 (1976) pp. 317–41.

33. R. G. Klein, 'The ecology of early man in southern Africa', *Science*, 197 (1977), pp. 115–26; F. Wendorf and others, 'The prehistory of the Egyptian Sahara', *Science*, 193 (1976), pp. 103–14; F. Wendorf and others, 'Dates for the Middle Stone Age of East Africa', *Science*, 187 (1975), pp. 740–2; Butzer, 'Sediment stratigraphy'. Meanwhile an (admittedly not very reliable) racemisation test had pushed the offending Kalambo wood back beyond 190,000 years; J. D. Clark, in K. W. Butzer and G. L. Isaac, (eds.), *After the Australopithecines* (Hague, 1975), p. 615.

material at Klasies River Mouth was being put by one reckoning at 30,000 plus and by another at no fewer than 95,000 years.³⁴ Now Howieson's Poort is a *blade* industry. What is more, it is characterised by *small* blades, verging on the microlithic. Blades are also common in the Bambata industries of Zimbabwe, now dated for the most part before 40,000 BC. In Kenya, calculations from the weathering of obsidian tools have shown not only that the local Middle Stone Age began more than 120,000 years ago but also that by about 45,000 years the characteristic points had been replaced by thumbnail scrapers, 'the hallmark of the Later Stone Age'.³⁵ It is at first sight strange that in many places such sophisticated equipment is followed as well as preceded by simpler assemblages of conventional Middle Stone Age appearance. But from a functional point of view such anomalies fall into place: as skills increased and environments changed the balance of advantage shifted back and forth between stone-headed spears and those fashioned from bone or wood.

Thus to bracket the Middle Stone Age of sub-Saharan Africa with the Middle Palaeolithic of North Africa and Europe, as Desmond Clark did in the title of his Cambridge chapter, seems doubly misleading. In the first place the Middle Stone Age began much earlier, and in the second place it includes features and phases which, if found in a European context, would have been classed as Upper rather than Middle Palaeolithic. This typological overlap was recognised long ago, but the revolution in chronology gives it a new significance.³⁶ It begins to appear that the African material of all kinds has temporal priority, and the European cultures of the later Pleistocene can be seen as specialised selections from the techniques and tools and life-ways that had already been developed in the African heartland.

The same can be said of the human population, for the new cultural chronology has profound implications for our ideas about man's biological evolution. Rhodesian Man and his kinsmen have been removed to the Middle Pleistocene, where they can do no further harm to Africa's reputation.³⁷ The 'essentially modern' remains found long ago by Leakey at Kanjera in Kenya are still undated but indirect evidence suggests that they too belong to that epoch or to the very beginning of the Upper Pleistocene. A more definite date of at least 80,000 years is assigned to fragmentary but to all appearance entirely modern remains from Border Cave in South Africa. At Klasies River Mouth, around 100,000 years ago, and in the Omo valley in Ethiopia perhaps 130,000 years ago people of modern form seem to have coexisted with more robust and primitive types, strongly suggesting a

34. Ronald Singer and John Wymer, *The Middle Stone Age at Klasies River Mouth* (Chicago, 1982), pp. 40, 109-12, 192-99.

35. J. W. Michels, I. S. T. Tsong and C. M. Nelson, 'Obsidian dating and East Africa', *Science*, 219 (1983), pp. 361-66.

36. M. C. Burkitt, *South Africa's Past in Stone and Paint* (Cambridge, 1928), pp. 76-87.

37. R. G. Klein, 'Geological antiquity of Rhodesian Man', *Nature*, 244 (1973), p. 211.

transitional stage in the development of *Homo sapiens sapiens*.³⁸ It is quite likely that the more advanced skulls belonged to females and that the modernisation of the male took rather longer. Be that as it may, there is increasing acceptance of the view that the physical evolution of humankind not only began in Africa but also ended there.³⁹ Relevant here is the growing conviction (of special interest to those of us who are more at home with words than with things) that the real asset of *Homo sapiens sapiens* was not a smooth forehead or a punch for making blade tools, but language.⁴⁰ It is almost impossible to suppose that language, and therewith human culture, could have developed in all its complexity and diversity in the forty thousand years since he 'appeared' in Europe and western Asia. But that difficulty disappears if we can assume that language and culture, along with modern cranial anatomy, had been evolving in Africa during the previous hundred millennia, from the beginning of the Middle Stone Age on.

All this was very long ago, and nothing said so far would exclude a restatement of the old model, namely that progress shifted to the new peripheries as soon as *modern* man had radiated out of Africa. Moreover, between 60,000 and 10,000 BC there were long periods when a great desert, probably a more complete barrier than the modern Sahara, separated most of Africa from the rest of the Old World; and it is likely that that was when the racial differentiation of *Homo sapiens sapiens* mainly occurred. Did the Negroes then 'stagnate in utter isolation' from 50,000 BC onwards? Evidently they did not. For an even more important revision has been in the chronology of the Later Stone Age. Some of this is perhaps semantic, but on the most conservative view microlithic industries, such as are not found elsewhere until the Holocene, were present in many parts of Africa some ten thousand years earlier, soon after 20,000 BC. Among other things the microliths attest the invention of the bow and arrow, a stroke of genius which added enormously to the productivity of hunters. It is possible that bows with wooden arrows may have been used even earlier, and the microliths, as Clark noted long ago,⁴¹ are the product of a long African developmental sequence. In South Africa there is often a very long hiatus in the archaeological record between Middle and Later Stone Age deposits, since inland areas were too arid for habitation and the then coastal sites are now hidden under the sea. When people eventually re-occupied the ancient sites their equipment was naturally very different. Further north, however, there was continuity of occupation and of technical advance. In fact the whole of the Upper Pleistocene

38. G. P. Rightmire in L.-K. Königsson, (ed.), *Current Argument on Early Man* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 70–85; G. E. Kennedy, 'The emergence of *Homo sapiens*', *Man* 19 (1984), pp. 94–110.

39. G. Bräuer in F. H. Smith and F. Spencer (eds.), *The Origins of Modern Humans* (New York, 1984), pp. 327–410. This view was supported in varying degrees by other contributors to the volume, especially Clark Howell, C. B. Stringer and G. P. Rightmire.

40. See especially J. D. Clark, *New Men, Strange Faces, Other Minds* (London, 1983); Grover S. Krantz, 'Sapientisation and speech', *Current Anthropology*, 21 (1980), pp. 773–92.

41. *Stone Age Cultures of Northern Rhodesia*, p. 104.

saw the steady perfection of the African hunter-gatherer way of life, which even in its last decadence has seemed to many the most nearly ideal mode of human existence.

Historians, being professional cynics, are bound to ask whether the progress of research and the improvement of archaeological techniques are enough to account for the very different ways in which the prehistory of Africa has been presented during the last thirty years. Archaeologists tend to be unpolitical as well as highly professional people, and those working in Africa had obviously no motive to devalue the subject of their own research. But they are not immune from the *Zeitgeist*; and it is hard to doubt that their reading of the evidence in the 1950s and 1960s was subtly influenced by the prevailing view that Western intervention had stirred Africa from an immemorial slumber. By the same token, we have to ask whether the recent revision does not reflect the delayed impact of nationalism on prehistoric studies; and the answer has to be that of course it does. Things are not entirely simple, however. The initiators of the revision, as we saw, were (white) South Africans, in whom we may detect the influence, perhaps, of liberal ideology (though their claims related to a safely distant epoch), but more clearly of an overriding regional patriotism. (In much the same way, Americans with no trace of Red Indian blood have obviously been glad to demonstrate the independent rise of civilisation in the New World). But the running was soon taken up by others. In the 1970s the boldest revisions were made by American scholars such as Karl Butzer and Richard Klein in southern Africa, Fred Wendorf and his Texan colleagues in the north-east.

Like the contemporary explosion of African studies in other fields, their interest no doubt reflected the contemporary patronage of Black Africa by the United States, which would suggest to researchers that this was a continent where exciting discoveries were likely to be made.

Strikingly analogous revisions, though relating to a more recent era, have recently been carried out in the chronology of British prehistory, so that it is no longer possible, for instance, to see Stonehenge as the work of a Mycenaean architect.⁴² And it has been remarked that during the imperial era British scholars were happy to describe early Britain as a colonial annexe of eastern Mediterranean civilisation, because they identified with the hypothetical foreign rulers.⁴³ After 1960, however, they switched their allegiance to the native Britons, whose capacity for independent creation they were now anxious to establish. However, the new chronology was not just wishful thinking, but is solidly based on a technical advance, in this case the re-calibration of radiocarbon dates by means of tree-rings. To identify motives is not to discredit conclusions. Knowledge does advance, and new

42. C. Renfrew, *Before Civilisation: the radiocarbon revolution and prehistoric Europe* (Harmondsworth, 1976), p. 16.

43. C. Renfrew, 'Colonialism and megalithism', *Antiquity*, 41 (1967), pp. 276-88.

historical interpretations are not to be looked at askance simply because they have become congenial. And the evidence for the new African paradigm is also strong, even in its most radical form.

Desmond Clark, who was quick to welcome the revised chronology, used the Huxley Memorial lecture of 1974 to expound it to his British colleagues, inviting them to consider whether Africa, so far from being peripheral in later world prehistory, had not actually been paramount.⁴⁴ In subsequent writings, however, he has stopped just short of this claim. And indeed there are good reasons why those with a personal and professional stake in Africa should be content with parity of esteem. To demand prehistoric paramountcy might seem a mere inverted chauvinism, a repetition of previous error. Yet the evidence seems to support such chauvinism, and it can be supported by theoretical argument.

In the past the study of early human history has been unduly influenced by concepts borrowed from biology, such as 'adaptation' and 'selective pressure'. If for a change we start from the premiss that for human beings opportunity, not necessity, is the mother of invention, the long supremacy of Africa becomes easily predictable. Men and women naturally thrive best in the lands to which from their origins they were physiologically and ecologically adapted, in 'the hospitable and satisfying hearth'⁴⁵ of Africa. Thriving, they became and remained more numerous there than anywhere else. And so, probably throughout the Pleistocene, there were in Africa both larger stocks of genes for evolution to work with and more scope for cultural interchange.

This discussion will seem entirely superfluous to those who are persuaded that African underdevelopment began only with the coming of the caravels. That proposition, however, like the antithetic one that Africa had been backward for ever, lacks historical perspective. By the usual criteria of technology, organisation and creativity there was a vast gap between sub-Saharan Africa and the lands to the north in the time of Stonehenge and the Middle Kingdom, perhaps an even wider one in the age of Homer and Isaiah. It was not, as has been suggested, that Africa 'slept' during the last ten millennia before Christ. That epoch saw the flowering of rock art in north and south, the development of an 'aquatic civilisation', the probably independent invention of pottery, the partially independent elaboration of Sudanic and Guinean agriculture, probably also the formation of the distinctively African systems of kinship, music and ritual. Progress did not stop, but it was overtaken by the extraordinary changes taking place elsewhere, first in lands with special advantages for agriculture and then in lands that lent themselves to water-borne and horse-borne commerce. Adam

44. 'Africa in Prehistory: peripheral or paramount', *Man*, 10 (1975), pp. 175-198.

45. W. W. Howells, 'Neanderthals: names, hypotheses and scientific method', *American Anthropologist*, 76 (1974), p. 33.

Smith noted long ago that in Africa, especially by comparison with Europe, the division of labour was severely restricted by the inherent difficulties of transport.⁴⁶ And it is tragically obvious that the African savannas, so kindly to the hunter-gatherer, provide much less than optimal conditions for the farmer. The long perspective, however, may serve to show that Africa's recent eclipse and present disarray are not likely to be permanent.

This essay has itself had a fairly long prehistory as a seminar paper, and meanwhile research and argument have gone on apace. Much that was only tentatively suggested five years ago has become almost orthodox. Thus in a report of a conference held at Berkeley in honour of Desmond Clark in April 1986 it is stated as an established fact that *Homo sapiens sapiens* was 'widely distributed in Africa well before [his] appearance in Europe and the Near East'.⁴⁷ Also, David Phillipson has published a book in which he spells out current convictions much more clearly than he or others had done in the 'official' histories and goes a long way, though not I think the whole way, towards answering the complaints voiced earlier in this paper.⁴⁸ On the other hand, as was to be expected, the reaction has begun. Lewis Binford has made a comprehensive criticism of the inferences drawn by others from a key South African site, and has argued that the Middle Stone Age inhabitants of the caves at Klasies River Mouth were nothing like as ancient as had been claimed, nor anything like as proficient.⁴⁹ It remains to be seen whether this is the beginning of a successful counter-offensive or merely a rearguard action.

46. *The Wealth of Nations*, Book One, p. 13.

47. *Nature*, 322 (1986), p. 774.

48. *African Archaeology* (Cambridge 1985).

49. L. R. Binford, *Faunal Remains at Klasies River Mouth* (New York, 1984). See the discussion in *Current Anthropology*, 27 (1986), pp. 56-62.

BOOK REVIEWS

Black Africa 1945–80: economic decolonisation and arrested development, by D. K. Fieldhouse. Allen and Unwin, London, 1986. xiv + 260 pp. £22.50 hardback, £9.95 paperback. ISBN 0 04 325017 3.

The argument in this textbook is that economic development in post-independent Africa has been made unsatisfactory by the political leadership and administration of the post-colonial nation states. While the worst vestiges of colonialism have been perpetuated, namely the low productivity of peasant agriculture which is squeezed to provide foreign exchange, forced savings and food for the state and privileged urban consumption and employment, the most responsible aspect of colonial rule has been jettisoned; as peasants understandably withdraw from commercial production, African state external borrowing dramatically increased during the nineteen seventies to maintain bloated state employment, overspending and overcentralization. Industrialization, which is related to the propensity for import substitution and largely by international firms rather than to the export processing of local raw materials, is precipitate and inefficient. The costs of bad policy, encouraged by those central European development economists who held sway but without any knowledge of central African realities, are borne by peasants whose agriculture should have been modernized. Only then would necessarily slow development be possible in Africa.

Professor Fieldhouse, the 'empirical economic historian', has never fought shy of the big subject. His primary empirical work was on the biggest multinational, *Unilever*, in Africa and not some little company which might have little historical import. Previous texts of synthesis have included *Economics and Empire 1830–1914* and *Colonialism 1870–1945*. And, Fieldhouse is best remembered as that scourge of Lenin, in his 1961 essay on *Imperialism* which sought to prove that the Hobson–Lenin theory did not fit the economic facts of the connection between the British export of capital and the scramble for Africa but ended up, as Norman Ethrington (*Theories of Imperialism*, London 1984, pp. 236–7) has pointed out, with an explanation for imperialism as national conflict in Europe. This was the very purpose that Hobson and Lenin, from different premises, had wanted to explain.

Clearly, old dogs aren't taught new tricks and exactly the same pattern emerges in this latest text, an expansion of a 1980 conference paper which links together the two apparently disparate phenomena of political decolonization and recent economic performance within the comparative experience of Francophone and Anglophone Africa. Although Fieldhouse presents an empirical balance sheet to evaluate two main theories, which are unjustifiably amalgamated as 'a Marxist-dependency scheme' and 'a conservative consensus', it is clear where his sympathy lies. Bad policy, not an uncontrollable international environment or imperialism, is the cause of malaise while antipathy to the Marxists and their ilk prevents Fieldhouse from stating what the differences between policy and 'bad' policy or development and 'bad' development might entail. Thus, we are given a justifiable impression that both left and right are now united in the view that political leaderships, of whatever colour, have served themselves rather than their peoples because they believed in fast development or a wrong strategy or, where the development strategy was right, it was badly implemented. However, if all this happened because a doctrine of development has been implanted on national grounds as the only basis for post-colonial state legitimation, it is not surprising, as the author frequently states in his country case studies and in the conclusion, that any policy for 'development' itself was bound to

have a marginal impact on the course of experience. The problem is state policy itself, or development as the political means for constructing social order. Development, as qualitative structural change or making things better, happens because the state makes it happen. If the state cannot make it happen better because it is ruled through corruption or wants to go too fast or acts selectively for partial interest and certainly not for peasants, then there is an old liberal colonial tradition, and not some new-fangled consensus, which has always rejected the idea of development itself along with its full ill-effects.

But Fieldhouse doesn't go down the liberal road. He retains an image of policy and stays within the state. His method of evaluating performance is not mainly to pursue the empirical reckoning of those who have done well out of independence nor, certainly, to give a privileged conceptual position to, say, classes of labour. Rather, the themes of industrialization, agriculture and public debt are organized as questions to run across countries, for example, Kenya and Tanzania or Ivory Coast and Senegal, within a national frame of account of reference. Inconsistency is the result. For instance, Senegal's industrialization is relatively efficient because it is foreign dominated and thus the proponent of marxism-dependency, Samir Amin, is criticised for proposing that inefficient import substituting industrialization (ISI) is correlated with foreign ownership in Senegal and that policy could be changed (p. 227). Yet, for elsewhere, like Kenya or Nigeria which have not been studied by the unfortunate Amin, we are informed that relatively high import coefficients, capital intensity, low capital productivity and *foreign ownership* of industries are well correlated as causes of high cost and inefficient ISI (pp. 195-6). And, for non-specialists, whether student or not, some sloppy formulation accompanies the inconsistency: a 'positive balance of payments' should be positive on current account (p. 121); a 'peasant mode of production' is eschewed in the literature and is not justified here (p. 127); the Kenya debate on indigenous capitalism and the middle peasantry is mangled because it is the preponderant strength of middle peasant production rather than their 'limited growth of production' (p. 167) which threatens direct accumulation of the indigenous capitalist class. All this goes to show that there is no one balance sheet of economic performance and certainly not one so coloured by the preconceived expectations of an observer who stands in a position both within and askance of the object of the state.

In all likelihood, this book will probably catch on. It captures the mood of an age which embraces not only 'the conservative consensus' but also that body of opinion, left and right, which hangs to neoliberalism as the comforting retreat in the midst of some African material discomfort. After all, Etherington suggested that Fieldhouse's ironic fallacy of his imperialism essay captured attention because it said 'what oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed'. Here the thought is that on balance those local colonial chaps, in their absolutist but well-intentioned and competent administration, were the most responsible rulers for Africa.

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Endgame in South Africa? by Robin Cohen. James Currey, London, and Unesco Press, Paris, 1986. x+108 pp. £4.95 paperback. ISBN 0 85255 308 0.

As the South African government tries with increasing desperation to disconnect its policies from the traditional ideology of apartheid, historians and social scientists have begun to give growing attention to the nature and meaning of that ideology in modern South Africa's social and economic development. Robin Cohen's essay is a useful excursus into the contemporary debate about apartheid and the possible

future scenarios for the ending of white control of the South African state. Unlike some previous sociological analysis, he takes the actual meaning of apartheid ideology very seriously, arguing that it was more than a mere Afrikaner 'civil religion' for it has also had a massive impact on the lives of black, brown and white South Africans. He does not link the evolution of apartheid to a wider process of racial segregationism in South African history, but shows that it provided a model of a future end state in South Africa to which National Party politicians like Dinges and Verwoerd placed enormous commitment in the 1950s as the vast experiment in social engineering on racial lines commenced.

The essay provides an important critique of the idea that South Africa was some variant of a 'plural society' with its different segments meeting mainly in the market place but living otherwise in self-contained cultures. This tradition in sociological writing was developed initially by J. S. Furnivall in Indonesia and M. G. Smith in the Caribbean and was applied to the South African context by John Rex, though arguably the degree of capitalist penetration of South African society and the degree of 'inter-racial' mixing was such that the notion of relatively self-contained ethnic segments had become something of a misnomer by at least the end of the nineteenth century. Cohen argues in addition that the resulting attempt by the South African state to reorganize the society on ethnic lines from the 1950s was doomed to fail given that this 'flies in the face of South African history and the demands of the economy'. Surprisingly, he does not make more of the evidence from the Surplus Peoples Project which has shown that, despite the seemingly inexorable process of industrialization in the 1960s and 1970s, the South African government has in fact been remarkably successful in channeling blacks into the Homelands. Between 1960 and 1980, for instance, the proportion of blacks located in the Homelands rose from 39.5 per cent to 45 per cent and, if migrants are included, the latter figure rises to some 60 per cent. In demographic terms at least the aims of the apartheid policy have been realised contrary to the expectation of so many analysts from the 1950s onwards.

The harsh system of authoritarian control that buttresses the apartheid system is another area that Cohen's essay surveys and the work draws on some of the research of the social geographers to show how apartheid is an ideology for the ordering of space. Within this framework of spatial compartmentalization it appears to a large section of white opinion perfectly 'natural' for 'races' to live separately and Cohen argues that there is little evidence of anxiety or guilt in white thinking over this, thus contradicting much of the research of the school of social psychologists since the time of I. D. MacCrone on the high propensity of white South Africans to guilt, aggression and social phobias. There might have been more emphasis, in this respect, on the cultural struggle within South African society which has been crucial to the ideological legitimization of apartheid. The South African state since at least the 1950s has done much to undermine the efforts at creating a vibrant urban multi-racial culture rooted in music, drama and literature while the encapsulated white society has been fed a diet of trashy thrillers and soap operas which has pandered to fantasies of racial and sexual violence. It is this dimension of cultural conflict which has done much to reinforce white racism in South African society and to undermine attempts at political liberalization.

Cohen's essay concludes with a brief review of the alternative models for future political change, arguing that the 'top down' analyses of such analysts as Adam, Schlemmer and Gann and Duignan no longer really work, though he is sceptical of alternative revolutionary scenarios suggesting a mass popular uprising. Cohen argues in fact for a South African variant of the Zimbabwean model for ending white rule and suggests that a 'small opportunist element' in the A.N.C. may seek negotiation with the South African government as part of a deal which might also include

Buthlezi's *Inkatha ka Zulu*. The significance of this scenario is that it would leave the power bases in the Homelands intact and raises the question of whether South African politics are not, in the end, different in kind to those elsewhere in Africa. South Africa, Cohen concludes, will remain inextricably linked to the western capitalist system, though he does not confront the possibility of superpower involvement. In the end the issues become too vast and complex to be dealt with in a short essay, though its crisp text and lack of jargon make it a useful contribution to student reading lists. The issues it raises will hopefully provoke further sociological research.

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PAUL B. RICH

Jonas Savimbi, a Key to Africa, by Fred Bridgland. Mainstream Publishing, Edinburgh, 1986. 513 pp. £14.95. ISBN 0 906391 99 7.*

Angola is now in its twenty-fifth year of a bruising war, and yet remarkably little is known about the UNITA movement, led by Jonas Savimbi. Fred Bridgland's large book is thus a welcome addition to a meagre literature. The author does not conceal his preference for UNITA, but he is far from providing an uncritical hagiography. The errors, weaknesses and even the atrocities committed by Savimbi's men are not hidden. Nor is Bridgland viscerally hostile towards the MPLA. Indeed, he shows a marked respect for Agostinho Neto, the first president of Angola. However, the author has relied very heavily on Savimbi's own version of events, which is a particular difficulty for periods and themes for which no other evidence exists. This is compounded by the fact that Bridgland admits to speaking only 'pidgin Portuguese' and a few words of African languages, which has cut him off from some of the few existing sources and made him dependent on UNITA interpreters during his own visits to Angola. The second major problem with the book lies in its chronological structure and anecdotal presentation, with little or no attempt at analysis. Some of the most interesting features of the book thus have to be read between the lines of a dense mass of narrative.

The account of Savimbi's origins and youth in Angola shows how this typical product of the Protestant élite of Central Angola was also drawn into the Catholic network by one of the coincidences of a difficult educational career. At a later stage, this was to give Savimbi an invaluable entrée into one of the most powerful and poorly known of Angola's institutions. In Lisbon, Savimbi met Agostinho Neto and flirted with communism, and Bridgland shows for how long Savimbi's relations with the MPLA consisted of a curious mixture of attraction and repulsion. A dislike of atheism and of the dominant position of *mestiços* in the MPLA are given as the major reasons for his not joining forces with Neto. Savimbi's account of his period with Holden Roberto's FNLA movement is clearly strongly tinged with hindsight, and is not convincing. This is one of the weakest parts of the book.

After breaking with Roberto, Savimbi again hesitated as to whether to join the MPLA. Bridgland asserts that it was the combined pressure of the Chinese, SWAPO and influential cabinet ministers in both Tanzania and Zambia which persuaded Savimbi to found UNITA instead. The leadership of the new movement consisted of a disparate collection of intellectuals from all over Angola, but its rank and file was largely recruited from the Chokwe diaspora in Zambia. And throughout the period of Portuguese rule, the soldiers and the peasant support in eastern

*This review was first written for the Portuguese-language service of the BBC.

Angola appear to have been mainly Chokwe. Savimbi's marriage to an Ngangela girl smacks of a traditional African attempt to bridge the ethnic gap between the Chokwe and the Ngangela peoples, many of whom were more favourable to the MPLA. UNITA's multi-ethnic leadership and Chokwe base contrasts with the usual picture of UNITA as an Ovimbundu movement. But where Bridgland is weak is the coverage of the period from 1969 to 1973. The well-documented collaboration between UNITA and the Portuguese army is dealt with uneasily and rather quickly, although the author does concede that it is hard to accept UNITA's contention that the documents are forgeries.

For the period following the Portuguese coup, Bridgland covers well worn ground, though his insistence that UNITA wanted elections and did not initiate the fighting with the MPLA is cogently argued. His description of Zambia's pro-UNITA role, based on a long period of residence in Lusaka, also breaks new ground. But the book is most useful for the years of UNITA's guerilla struggle since 1976. The account of Savimbi's 'long march' shows how close the MPLA and Cubans came to capturing UNITA's leader. That they failed was partly due to the emergence of a new wave of UNITA leaders, mainly Ovimbundu NCOs who had fought in the Portuguese army. However, Bridgland also shows how divided the Ovimbundu as a whole have been in their attitude towards UNITA, which further erodes the crude caricatures of UNITA as an Ovimbundu tribal movement. And it is clear, in terms of the MPLA's own admissions, that UNITA has progressively expanded its guerilla operations to the whole country, indicating the increasingly pan-ethnic nature of the movement. What is disappointing is that we are only offered glimpses of why dissatisfaction with the régime in Luanda has become so great, and why people might prefer UNITA. The constant harping on 'Cuban occupation' is not very convincing. More interesting are snippets about the MPLA's treatment of chiefs and religious bodies, the break-down of the distribution system, public executions denounced by Amnesty International and a programme of strategic hamlets. Even more shadowy is UNITA's own programme, which comes over as a vague populism, with few or no concrete policies. This is in strong contrast to the sensitive and empathetic descriptions of individual UNITA commanders met by the author.

The really thorny issue remains relations with South Africa. Bridgland is acutely aware of the disastrous public relations impact of Savimbi's alliance with Pretoria, and he stresses Savimbi's personal dislike of apartheid, as well as his desperate need for help. More interestingly, Bridgland shows that relations between South Africa and UNITA have not been smooth. South Africa preferred to support the Chipenda FNLA and was quite prepared to do secret deals with Luanda. Nevertheless, as the author himself admits, a great deal remains murky in this relationship.

Bridgland's conclusion is a sombre one. The situation is deadlocked, for UNITA cannot capture and hold major towns. The Cubans are digging in, but the MPLA seems incapable of waging effective anti-guerilla warfare. If the South Africans left Namibia, it would not change much, for UNITA is receiving increasing support from Zaire, in close collaboration with Morocco and the USA. Even now, UNITA finances a large part of its operations by exporting diamonds through Zaire. The only conceivable solution would be for the tentative contacts between the MPLA and UNITA to result in an agreement to form a coalition government and hold elections. Savimbi says he wants this outcome, but it appears that only a major upheaval in Luanda would bring the MPLA seriously to the negotiating table.

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GERVASE CLARENCE-SMITH

Agricultural Development in Southern Africa: farm household economics and the food crisis, by Allan Low. James Currey, London, 1986. xiii + 217 pp. £19.50 hardback. ISBN 0 85255 102 9.

Rural Development in South Africa: a case-study of the Amatola Basin in the Ciskei, edited by Chris de Wet and Simon Bekker. Shuter & Shooter, Pietermaritzberg, 1985. 165 pp. R25.00 paperback. ISBN 0 86985 848 3.

These are two very different books, the link between them being the impact of South Africa and its economy on the prospects for agricultural production both nearby and in adjacent countries.

Allan Low's book seeks to apply the economic theory of household decision-making to farm households in Swaziland and other African countries bordering South Africa. This is a valuable book for agricultural economists interested in the detailed application of farm household theory to the factor and product market conditions which exist in the South African periphery. The main feature is the regional labour market and wage levels, which result in an exodus of able-bodied males from the farm household and stagnation in farm production. Cash remittances from wage earners to the farm household mean that there is little incentive for food-deficit households to increase output—what is relevant for them is the purchasing power of wages over retail food prices, not the producer price of their own output.

Low's book is fairly comprehensive within the limitations of the economic model he uses. The book contains a consistent interplay between theory, empirical investigation, and agricultural policy. Feminists will not be happy with the uncritical use of the notion, derived from the so-called New Home Economics, of 'comparative advantage' determining the division of labour between the sexes in the farm household. The sub-title of the book is misleading since the 'food crisis' it refers to is not the analysis of famine prevalent elsewhere in Africa, but is output stagnation due to market conditions specific to the countries studied.

The second book is an edited collection of papers written about a particular area of Ciskei, one of the South African 'homelands'. The approach is multi-disciplinary. There are chapters on the geography, history, education system, administration, agriculture, health provision, and rural development of the area. These aspects are located within an overall 'dependency' perspective which stresses the constraints on development in the area and the non-viability of the homeland economy within the larger South African context. Some points of similarity to Low's analysis are found in the non-viability of farm production due to its poor resource base, lack of investment, lack of able-bodied adult labour (away on wage work), and small size of the local market.

This is a useful book both for its coverage of a type of situation about which relatively little is known outside South Africa, and in its identification of factors inhibiting the development of the homeland economy. The presentation is descriptive and clear. Its content will be of interest to anyone concerned with learning more about the very poor development prospects of the homelands within South Africa.

University of East Anglia

FRANK ELLIS

Ijeshas and Nigerians: the incorporation of a Yoruba kingdom, 1890s-1970s, by J. D. Y. Peel. Cambridge University Press, 1983. xiv+346 pp. £27.50. ISBN 0 521 22545 0.

Fathers Work for their Sons: accumulation, mobility and class formation in an extended Yoruba community, by S. S. Berry. University of California Press, 1985. x+225 pp. £30.95. ISBN 0 520 05164 5.

Much has been written about Nigeria as being black Africa's most populous and wealthy nation, the fascinating and rapidly changing 'giant' of the continent. But how does it feel to live there? Twenty years after the outbreak of the Civil War, how many ordinary people within the country perceive themselves primarily as Nigerians? How do they view the oil boom of the 1970s and how have they sought to capture and build upon the sudden wealth which it generated? These are some of the questions answered, with reference to the Yoruba of eastern Oyo State, in these two stimulating and scholarly books.

As Peel's work immediately makes clear, the most obvious and enduring characteristic of the Yoruba over the past century has been their heterogeneity. It is only within the past thirty years that many Ijeshas have begun to regard the labels 'Yoruba' and 'Nigerian' as important signals of their collective identity. This shift in identity has grown as much out of the politics of independence as those of Indirect Rule. Moreover, its most fundamental cause has been the great twentieth-century increase in personal mobility, which enabled many individuals to 'discover' Nigeria for themselves as traders in imported cloth, clerks, teachers and professional men. Conversion to Islam and Christianity has been a final powerful force, more narrowly in forging links between schoolmates from different towns, and more widely in fostering a belief that *Olaju* (enlightenment) can be spread throughout society and across cultural barriers. In a profound and detailed book which repays thorough reading, Peel locates these major changes within the context of Ilesha's social and political institutions and of the vividly remembered nineteenth-century past. He emphasises that to the Ijesha people their past is a valued possession. It is both the source and the expression of collective values which remain a fundamental part of Ijesha identity, despite the more recent rise of regional and national loyalties.

Both the town of Ilesha and the small villages of Iree and Eripa, studied by Berry and located some twenty miles to the north, lie outside the heartland of the two best-known Yoruba states of the nineteenth century, Oyo and Ibadan. Indeed, throughout the nineteenth century the Ijesha remained in a state of bitter enmity with these powerful neighbours. Initially they managed to hold their own, but in the 1860s their fortunes began to change. Ilesha was sacked by Ibadan in 1870. Many people then left the town, and its elaborate system of government by title-holders fell into disarray. Just at this time the palm-kernel export trade arose and many Ijesha men found a niche within it, helped by their close links with the Lagosian Ijesha captives, then organized into the powerful Ekitiparapo Society. Using the wealth accumulated from trade, the Society supported a new Ijesha military camp at Kiriji and backed the campaigns of Ogedengbe, who remains a powerful figure in Ijesha culture. In this way the themes of mobility and kin-based contacts with the wealth and power of Lagos, emerge clearly from Peel's account of nineteenth-century history to provide continuity with the trends of the colonial period and beyond.

Many other examples of continuity emerge from Peel's study, which provides insights into almost every aspect of Ijesha life, from the intricacies of household and family relations through to those of factional and party politics. Throughout his

exploration of the changing relationship between the Ijesha and the Nigerian state, he never loses sight of these fundamental continuities. The result is a book which is both scholarly and exciting. It should be required reading for all those interested in Nigeria's present as well as its past.

Despite its clear relevance to the understanding of current events, Peel's book does not deal directly with them, providing only a brief summary of the major developments which followed the outbreak of the Civil War. Berry's book provides the ideal complement in this respect, taking up the story where Peel leaves off and moving on to an impassioned account of the waste and inefficiency which she saw within the oil-boom economy of 1979. Those now experiencing the austerity and reforms which have followed will no doubt sympathize with her distress that more was not done to build upon the wealth of that time and will be eager to hear and debate her views on why this was so. Refreshingly, Berry does not lay all the blame upon the politicians and military governors who initially directed the flow of wealth to regions and individuals within Nigeria. Instead, she focuses her attention upon the cocoa-farmers, teachers, artisans and traders who, coming originally from Iree and Eripa, are now scattered throughout Oyo State. As with Peel's book, this study is full of anecdotes, life-histories and personal vignettes which make the vital connection between distanced analysis and local reality. Through Berry's account of her experiences while driving around in the region and getting her car repaired, repeatedly, one even gets a rare glimpse of the researcher in action.

The people interviewed by Berry emerge from her book as resourceful and vigorous individuals, though she has few kind words for the economy and society in which they were enmeshed in 1979. In her view the oil boom had spun them into a whirl of perpetual motion within which productive investment and consolidation became impossible. Even the Oba's palace which Iree's sons were helping to build remained unfinished, as succession disputes and alternative projects diverted funds elsewhere. Meanwhile, large amounts of time and money were being spent by individuals and local councils in trying to gain access to the central Nigerian state. Berry describes this as the natural outcome, not of corruption or poor planning by politicians, but of the very structure of the state, which through its extended bureaucracy and control over oil revenues had become the main source of jobs and finance within the nation. During the 1970s those who had not already 'discovered' Nigeria were having it thrust upon them.

When examining the strategies of individual entrepreneurs within this context, Berry also considers the legacy of the complex systems of patronage and title-taking anatomized for the nineteenth century by Peel. She argues that within Yoruba culture, personal contacts and patron-client relationships remained vitally important and had to be invested in heavily to ensure business success. Each entrepreneur found an increasing amount of his time and energy being absorbed in this way as his business expanded, which in Berry's view explains why few businesses in the informal sector did indeed expand to become major employers. Nor did they become wholly capitalist, in the sense of growing through the reinvestment of profits; many owners perceived themselves as working not only for themselves and their businesses but also for their sons. Much of each firm's income was thus spent on education in the hope of giving the founder's sons access to lucrative jobs elsewhere, which often meant within the growing state.

Unlike Peel's study, which clearly deals with durable features of Ijesha society, Berry's study raises the issue of how far the author's analysis will outlast the specific circumstances of 1979, when the research underlying it was conducted. Already there have been substantial Civil Service salary cuts, and further changes in the balance of income between state employees and private entrepreneurs may well

occur. Nevertheless, Berry's study is likely to remain valuable on at least two counts: as a provocative stimulus to debate, and as a lively account of the careers of a wide variety of Yoruba people during one of the most exciting periods of their history. It remains only to note that, although both books are beautifully produced, Berry's has no map. This is especially confusing in a book which revolves around the movements of people from two small villages to a variety of other places, several of which cannot be found on standard maps of the nation.

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SUSAN MARTIN

Coping with Hunger: hazard and experiment in an African rice-farming system, by Paul Richards. The London Research Series in Geography No. 11. Allen and Unwin, London, 1986. xii+176 pp. £20.00 hardback. ISBN 0 04 333025 8.

This is a really good book. It reports promptly on intensive ethnographic field research done in a farming village in Sierra Leone in 1982-3 and as recently as June 1985. Richards examines in concrete detail the agronomic and agricultural techniques of farmers with the specific purpose of asking how formal agricultural development programmes engage with these practices and therefore how a normal 'top-down' development programme needs to be replaced by a 'farmer-first-and-last' approach. The author shows how persistent the technology transfer attempts have been from the early colonial efforts to present day World Bank International Aid and Development programmes where the emphasis is on achieving a shift from what is perceived as 'backward' upland rice cultivation to 'modern' labour intensive swamp rice cultivation. Yet such a shift wholly misapprehends the situation of the Mende rice farmer who faces not land shortage but a sometimes acute labour shortage and therefore is interested in yields per unit of labour as much as yields per hectare. The farming households most likely to fail and suffer during the hungry season are the smaller households, farmers unable to command sufficient labour to complete work on their farms. In a telling passage Richards points out that the five most successful farms in the village surveyed produced between 88 per cent and 95 per cent more rice, depending on type of soil, than the poorest five: 'The argument for a shift in R&D emphasis away from technology transfer approaches towards greater support for indigenous initiatives hinges on the claim (supported by these figures) that there is considerable scope for a policy directed at bringing the less effective farmers up to the level of the best results attainable from local practices' (p. 110). Moreover the perceptions of the scientific experts (essentially analytical, breaking the landscape up into ecological boxes within which research is then directed to an optimum usage) are not those of the farmers whose extensive and detailed agrobottanical and ecological knowledge, which is well documented here, is directed towards a synthetic view of the landscape and the integration of various opportunities where the focus of interest is often ecological transition zones. Mende rice farmers are great innovators and their lively interest in rice and its varieties, and also the hardships of farming, are vividly presented. This lucid and uncluttered monograph contains a wealth of fine detail. Here is a case study which should be in the hands of anyone interested in the contemporary issues of agricultural development in tropical Africa.

University of Aberdeen

M. C. JEDREJ

The Novels of Nadine Gordimer: history from the inside, by Stephen R. Clingman. Allen & Unwin, London, 1986. xi+276 pp. £15. ISBN 0 04 800082 5.

This is a brilliant, subtle, sombre and—to borrow one of Clingman's favourite words—precise book. It charts Nadine Gordimer's development from the praise poem she addressed at the age of 9 to Paul Kruger to *July's People*, published 1981 (*Something Out There*, published 1984, is not discussed—further testimony to the leisurely pace of publishing compared to events in South Africa). Clingman wastes no time urging us to read Gordimer. There is little here about narrative or descriptive skills or about qualities of humour or irony. His concern is with her ideological development as she progresses 'from political ignorance to a profound politicality, from aspects of a racist mental world to one approaching a revolutionary alignment' (p. 223).

The book is suspended a little uneasily between two poles of argument. The *preface* claims that apartheid is not an aberration but an 'extreme example' illuminating 'in clearly defined form patterns that may be only more vaguely discernible elsewhere' (p. ix). Gordimer is a novelist whose work encapsulates the world system in epitome. The *afterword*, however, presents what has, in fact, been implicit in Clingman's discussion of the novels—that 'history may well end up being harsh to white South African novelists' for whom the special plea has to be made that 'history also applies to those who are born on its 'bad side' (p. 223)'. Clingman tried to rescue Gordimer from marginality by invoking Sartre's notion of a 'virtual public' and by arguing that the 'silences' of her fiction correspond to the 'unconscious' in South African history.

As applied to the novels, Clingman's argument is profoundly rewarding and it is hard to imagine them being subjected to more searching analysis than they are offered here. He is especially good on an early story 'Is there nowhere else we can meet?', deploying it as a 'genetic blueprint' for many of Gordimer's mature concerns, and excellent too on *A World of Strangers*, showing great sensitivity both to the text and to the brief political and cultural renaissance of the 1950s. But the book's highpoint is the chapter on *The Conservationist*. Clingman demonstrates more clearly than ever before the stature of this novel while exploring, too, the fracture at its centre between the social realism of the 'white' sections and the resort to symbolism to herald an ultimate 'black' triumph.

Only rarely does Clingman lose his touch, mainly when dealing with Gordimer's non-South African writings. He is unaware of the absurdity of her heart-of-darkness response to the experience of holding a baobab fruit in the Congo ('There came to me, through my hand, all the queerness of the continent' on p. 112), and his insistence that *A Guest of Honour* must be read as a novel about a future South Africa dismisses with uncharacteristic glibness Van Donge's demonstration of how unsatisfactorily it handles the issues of independent Africa where it is actually set. Perhaps, too, he might have done Gordimer a little more justice by relaxing the emphasis on history and ideology and conceding some of the pleasures of reading her work. To take up the parallel she has herself invoked, we don't read Tolstoy only to find out how Russian aristocrats felt between the French and Russian revolutions.

The most modest blurb I have read in years describes Clingman as 'superbly placed' to write this book. As a young white South African who has studied Gordimer to find himself, he has written a book in which every sentence is loaded with an intellectual anguish, reflecting above all an anxiety to be scrupulously true to his subject. Both as tribute and analysis, it is essential reading.

University of York

LANDEG WHITE

Africa's Refugee Crisis, by CIMADE, INODEP and MINK. Zed Books, 1986. 158 pp. £16.95 hardback, £6.95 paperback. ISBN 0 86232 469 6 and 86232 470 X.

Recent events in Africa have raised a wide range of questions about the status and treatment of refugees. Should famine victims be regarded as refugees under international law? How can refugees be properly protected in their country of asylum? What form should external aid take in order to promote self-sufficiency amongst refugee communities? Should refugees be encouraged to return to their own countries?

These are all important issues. But this new book, a collaborative venture by three French organizations, scarcely addresses any of them.

Almost three-quarters of the text is devoted to an analysis of the 'root causes' of refugee movements in Africa. The foreign policies of the USA, USSR, France and Britain are examined and castigated in turn. This examination of 'general causes and responsibilities' is followed by a survey of local, 'African', factors such as religious intolerance, ethnic rivalry, inter-state conflict, class oppression and apartheid.

In this hectic round-up of recent international and African history, the refugees themselves are strangely absent. Indeed, the authors state at the outset that they have deliberately reduced their description of Africa's refugee communities 'to a minimum'. For a book which is clearly aimed at the general reader, this is a surprising and unhelpful decision. To its credit, the book successfully avoids the professional jargon of the refugee 'industry', but it is confusingly structured and awkwardly translated from French.

Only in the last 20 pages do the authors begin to tackle the question raised in the book's subtitle: what's to be done? They provide a useful analysis of the OAU's 1969 Refugee Convention and a spirited attack on the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA II), convened by the United Nations in July 1984. But the text has not been updated since its original publication shortly after that conference. As a result, the authors are unable to demonstrate how the famine of 1984-5 forced many aid agencies to suspend the developmental approach to refugee assistance discussed at ICARA II and to revert to large-scale emergency relief programmes.

For the reader who knows little about Africa's refugees, this book provides an accessible introduction to certain aspects of the topic. The knowledgeable reader who is looking for original ideas, arguments or information will find it extremely disappointing.

British Refugee Council, London

JEFF CRISP

Salt of the Desert Sun, by Paul E. Lovejoy. Cambridge University Press, 1986. xvi + 351 pp. £27.50. ISBN 0 521 30182 3.

In this book, Paul Lovejoy has given us as most detailed account not only of the various 'salts'—natron and trona as well as common salt—widely worked and traded in the Central Sudan, and their many uses, but also detailed accounts of their methods of preparation and the social relations involved. He also gives some estimates of the total quantities involved—somewhere between 8,000 and 20,000 tons a year.

Lovejoy stresses the low level of technology, which he believes made it impossible for local production to fulfil demand. There does indeed appear to have been a demand for imports of common salt, flavoured in accordance with local taste (to describe this as 'adulteration' is surely slightly Eurocentric?).

One of the most interesting parts of the book relates to the labour force. A large part of this was, necessarily, migrant (and he points out that migrant wage labour is no new phenomenon). Where the salt-works were under Tuareg control, labour tended to be slave or ex-slave; in areas of sedentary population such as Mangari and Munio, workers tended to be free migrants, eking out the proceeds of an unproductive agriculture. In Foli, east of Lake Chad, workers were of an artisan caste such as is also familiar in the Western Sudan. In the Benue valley, 'cooking' the brine from the springs was traditionally women's work; but the actual labour was done by slaves.

From labour, Lovejoy turns to the proprietorship of the salt deposits, and then to the discussion of the various salt trade networks—in the desert, across Lake Chad, across Bornu (this last involving between three and nine thousand tons of salt and natron); the Hausaland trade and its various re-export branches, and finally the distribution of the Benue salts and the trade from the northern Dallols, both of which had been brought within the Hausa trading system. Possibly because the westward re-export trade in 'salt' involved the same merchant groups he had previously encountered in his work on the kola trade, Lovejoy tends to regard this trade as a direct exchange of kola for natron in Asante. In fact, demand for natron and trona in Asante proper was small—there were no dyeing or tanning industries to generate industrial demand, no cattle requiring natron to be fed to them; nor did natron enter into Hausa cookery in the way it did in Bornu or Hausaland. The main demand was to the north, to which it must have been carried from Gonja. The Gonja trade, which supplied this area, had little or no connection with Asante after 1874.

In the final section of the book Lovejoy embarks on an interesting discussion of the relations between the salt trade and the political history of the Central Sudan, and in a final chapter he attempts to unravel the complex inter-relations between ethnicity, class and the state in the production and distribution of salt.

The book has a very extensive bibliography, showing the wide range of sources used. An invaluable contribution to the economic history of the Central Sudan, this book also opens up wider questions of relationships between the economy and other aspects of society which are relevant to other parts of Africa.

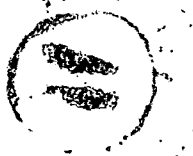
*Centre of West African Studies,
University of Birmingham*

MARION JOHNSON

John Philip (1775–1851): missions, race and politics in South Africa, by Andrew Ross. Aberdeen University Press, 1986. ix + 249 pp. £14.90 hardback and £8.90 paperback. ISBN 008 032457 6 and 032467 3.

In his life, and ever since his death, John Philip has been a controversial figure. As Director of the London Missionary Society in South Africa, he came regularly into conflict with the Government of the Cape Colony and with the colonists, and to later historians of the settler persuasion he was the epitome of unwarranted interference in the proper (that is to say exploitative) relations between white and black and between master and servant. Historians of more liberal and radical bents have been much more sympathetic towards him. W. M. Macmillan, in particular, was concerned to rehabilitate Philip, as can be seen from his two major historical works, *The Cape Coloured Question* and *Bantu, Boer and Briton*. He intended to write a full biography of Philip but was frustrated in this endeavour, largely though not entirely as a result of the destruction of Philip's personal papers in a fire at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1931. Now, more than half a century later, Andrew Ross has taken up the task.

The result has many of the strengths and weaknesses that are associated with biographies. Its particular strength lies first in his understanding of Philip's



Scottish background and of the ecclesiastical tradition in which Philip was situated. By showing Philip as a product of the Scottish Evangelical movement, which was closely intertwined with the Scottish Enlightenment, Ross is able to elucidate the mainsprings of Philip's actions in South Africa in a way that has not satisfactorily been done before.

Ross's second strength is at once the source of the main weakness of this book. On the one hand, he is a partisan, in the best sense of the word, for Philip, defending him, in general with success, against the numerous attacks that have been made on him. The trouble is that, as a consequence, he has tended to write a reactive book, whose pattern is informed by the criticisms made of Philip and by the vision of history entailed in those criticisms, rather than imposing his own, and thus Philip's priorities on the past. This is shown most clearly by the inclusion of a separate chapter on the Great Trek, in which Philip himself is not even cited. The result is thus a dialogue between Philip (and Ross almost as his *alter ego*) and a variety of historians, with Philip in general—and undoubtedly correctly—vindicated. Ross's knowledge of the Cape is somehow too limited to Philip's own writings, and in particular to his correspondence with the L.M.S., for him to give a fully satisfactory account of what Philip was up to, and up against.

These, though, are relatively minor criticisms. For a monocular vision of the Cape in the second quarter of the nineteenth century Philip could not be bettered. Historians will have to continue to read his writings, and they will read them with more profit and understanding after having absorbed the lessons of Andrew Ross's book. Moreover they, and others, will hopefully come to see Philip in his true position, as the first major proponent of the social gospel in Africa.

Rijksuniversiteit Leiden

ROBERT ROSS

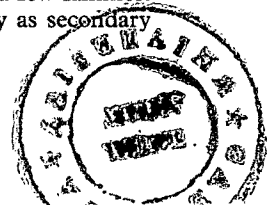
Political Economy of an Oligarchy: the case of Kano's bourgeoisie, by Ibrahim L. Bashir. (African studies Program, Boston University, 1984). 50 pp. ISBN 0044-7128.

Politics and the Administration of Industrial Incentives and Finance in Nigeria: the case of Kano, by Ibrahim L. Bashir. (African Studies Program, Boston University, 1984). 54 pp. ISBN 0044-7128.

Although the titles may suggest to the reader a treatment of two distinctive subjects, in substance both papers deal with the domination of the economic and political process in Kano by a small oligarchy. The first paper traces the development of the Kano entrepreneurial oligarchy. Kano city, being traditionally a trading centre on the Eastern trans-Sahara trade route, naturally had an established merchant class long before the colonial period. The merchants have always had a special relationship with the ruling class.

However, as a result of the British conquest and the imposition of colonial rule, with all its ramifications, the size and the role of the merchant class as well as other indigenous entrepreneurs in the economic and political life of Kano and Nigeria generally were significantly reduced. The introduction of European trading firms, Lebanese and Syrian businessmen into the distributive and retail business ensured a virtual control of the economy, and elimination of Nigerians in this lucrative business, by foreigners. Indigenous merchants were patronized only in areas where their knowledge was considered indispensable. As middlemen they played at best a secondary role in the economy.

As a class the merchant class was very small, consisting only of a few families. However, their incorporation along with the traditional aristocracy as secondary



functionaries in the colonial regime placed them in a strategic position once independence appeared imminent. In the local communities, their financial position had earned them some respect. When political parties were introduced in the north, the party leaders were drawn from among the members of the native administration who, Bashir rightly observes, had close relationship with the merchants. The financial support the merchants could provide to the political parties encouraged politicians to seek their support. Indeed merchants like Ibrahim Musa Gashash and the Dantata family were early supporters of the NPC.

Since they worked as allies during the decolonization process, many of them eventually became ministers or board members of government institutions in the regional government. Once in government, and this is the central thesis of both papers, these politicians/businessmen used their positions in government to promote their business interests and establish further relationships that would continue to protect their interests after they had left government. According to Bashir, government institutions relevant to industrial development continue to favour this group. Even when the Military took over and the north was divided into several states, Kano state government and institutions continued to favour this group even to the detriment of the state.

Both papers are devoted to showing how this oligarchy manipulated government policies to suit their self-interest. For example, the first major loan given out by the NRDC went to Dantata, the second to Uba Rigim, a parliamentarian. Government and its agencies were also directed to patronize these businesses. Similarly, during the implementation of the indigenization decree in the 1970s, Kano state was drawn into several unprofitable businesses being purchased by the oligarchy.

Few who know Nigeria would quarrel with what the author describes. Yet, because both works lack theoretical framework, one cannot but ask whether the situation described is peculiar to Kano alone. We have for example no explanation as to why this is the case. Is it not likely that this situation is a result of the contradiction between the realities of a colonial state and the desire to create a capitalist system in such a state?

Northwestern University

PAUL P. IZAH

George Washington Williams: a biography, by John Hope Franklin. University of Chicago Press, London, 1985. xxiv + 348 pp. £21.25. ISBN 0-226-26083-6.

It may be accidental that this biography was published in the centenary year of the completion of the West African Conference of Berlin, to whose outcome in the Congo the Afro-American writer, George Washington Williams (1849–91), contributed by demonstrating that Leopold II's African State violated the Berlin Act. But it is not accidental that this well-researched and most readable first biography of one of the pioneer black American historians should have been written by the doyen of Afro-American historians to-day. Professor John Hope Franklin spent forty years, in three continents, searching for materials on the elusive Williams; and the result is an impressive work which, for once, justifies and assertion on a publisher's blurb: 'a major event in American historiography'. It is also a valuable contribution to the study of Afro-American interest in and influence upon Africa.

Williams was interested in Africa as early as 1874 when he gave the commencement address at the Newton Theological Institution on 'Early Christianity in Africa'. This interest never deserted him, although his work in the 1880s for the two volumes of Afro-American history on which his scholarly reputation rests to-day, introverted his horizon to some extent. In 1890, however, Williams visited the Congo; and he

wrote from Stanley Falls in July of that year an 'Open Letter' to Leopold II and a report on the proposed Congo Railway. At St. Paul de Loanda in October 1890, Williams wrote a report to the American President on the Congo State which reveals his disillusionment with the Belgian monarch and his 'oppressive and cruel Government'. Professor Franklin prints these three documents as appendices (pp. 244-79).

Williams's African journey of over a year in often arduous conditions weakened his physical condition and he died at the early age of forty-one. His premature death put an end to Williams's proposed book on the Independent State of the Congo. But, now that we have Professor Franklin's splendid book about this 'flawed but brilliant human being' (p. 241), there can be no doubt about the importance of George Washington Williams's place in the campaign against the calamity of the Congo.

University of Edinburgh

GEORGE SHEPPERSON

BOOK NOTES

Africa. A handbook of film and video resources, edited by James Ballantyne and Andrew Roberts. British Universities Film and Video Council, 1986. 120 pp. £6 to members of BUFVC, £11 to non-members. ISBN 0 901299 46 4.

Produced in time for the last ASAUK conference at Canterbury (where film about Africa was on the programme) this well organized guide provides clear details about archival collections, and then more expansively and arranged by subject, film and video available for hire, free loan or sale. Each film listed has a brief annotation about contents, technical details and place of hire. A select bibliography completes a handbook which should prove to be essential to all who are interested in film or who teach about Africa.

Old Sinister. A memoir of Sir Arthur Richards, G.C.M.G., by Richard Peel. Published by the author, 1986. Available from F & P Piggott, Printers and Lithographers, Andersons Court, Newham Road, Cambridge. 196 pp. £8 hardback. ISBN 0 9511447 0 7.

Historians of the British Empire have tended to base their assessments of Lord Milverton's imperial career on the criticisms advanced by Lagos and other nationalist politicians of the tri-regional constitution which he drew up for Nigeria and the means by which he introduced it. Yet in all his posts Milverton (as Richards became in 1947) was also perceived as a vigorous and capable Governor, determined to maintain public order and to forward the orderly development of his territory and its people. Mr. Peel was well-placed to write this memoir—as he modestly calls his book. As well as conducting research in the public archives and among his colleagues in the Colonial Service, he had access to Milverton's private papers, and he had moreover his own observations to draw on from his service between 1945 and 1947 as the Governor's private secretary. Publishers apparently do not agree, but his thorough and objective study of a major figure in Nigerian and British colonial history is timely and valuable.

Bustamante and Manley in Jamaica and Azikiwe and Awolowo in Nigeria were doughty opponents of this formidable Governor, and yet, as Peel tells us, all four

conducted amicable correspondence with him after his retirement to the House of Lords. Here, as he graduated from the Labour to the Liberal and finally to the Conservative benches, his wise and weighty speeches on African affairs, including his support for Nigeria in its lonely struggle against the Biafran separatists, were heard with insufficient understanding.

Traders, Planters and Slaves. Market behaviour in Early English America, by David W. Galenson. Cambridge University Press, 1986. xiv + 230 pp. £27.50. ISBN 0 521 30845 3.

This study adds valuable new dimensions to our knowledge of the transatlantic slaving and trade triangle of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and thus has much to say to those interested in the history of West Africa. Professor Galenson, using the rich collection of Royal African Company documents at the British Public Record Office, focusses on the sale of 74,000 slaves in Barbados between 1673 and 1725, to present a careful, perceptive and often tentative analysis of market operations in the West Indian islands and also in West Africa and London.

What is shown is market behaviour of considerable sophistication by planters and traders responding to economic incentives. The Royal African Company in their persistent pursuit of profit, paid close attention to the many variables which influenced the price of slaves. Here are details about transport costs, ship size and slave mortality, the influence of health, sex and ages of African captives, and the international price of sugar and foreign wars, on the price of landed slaves in the West Indies. The RAC began to fail before 1688, Galenson argues, not because of what Adam Smith termed its 'negligence and profusion' of management sheltered by monopoly, but as a result of communication problems, the financial burdens of maintaining West African factories, and by becoming the reluctant banker and creditor to the West Indian planters. Exposure to a highly competitive system, and not monopoly, did for the Company.

Bristol, Africa and the Eighteenth Century Slave Trade to America. Vol. 1. The years of expansion 1698-1729, edited by David Richardson. Bristol Record Society's Publications Vol. XXXVIII, 1986. xxix + 203 pp. £9. ISBN 0 901583 00 00.

The first volume in a proposed multi-volume documentary study of Bristol's slave trade. This volume traces the nearly 600 voyages of Bristol ships to Africa following the end of the Royal African Company's monopoly, and is based on the Hobhouse papers and official trade and shipping records. Bristol shipping and capital closely rivalled London as the slave trade expanded in the early decades of the eighteenth century. Richardson suggests satisfactory rather than dramatic profits and also a possible reduction in slave mortality rates; the majority of Bristol ships slaved in the Bight of Biafra and sold their human cargoes in Jamaica, Barbados and Virginia.

To the Bitter End. A photographic history of the Boer War 1899-1902, by Emanuel Lee. Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1986. xii + 226 pp. £7.95 paperback. ISBN 0 14 007237 3.

The Eastman celluloid film and the cheap Brownie box camera put photography into the hands of the common people. Many British soldiers became amateur

photographers and a good number of their unsigned efforts appear in the history. The photographs are splendid, personal soldier-eye views of death, destruction, and the monotony of military life, but they support the text rather than the text amplifying the photographs except in a few instances. Nevertheless the whole is compulsive reading and viewing.

The British Empire as Superpower, 1919–1939, by Anthony Clayton. Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1986. xiv + 545 pp. £35. ISBN 0 333 41263 X.

During the inter-war years the military, naval and air power of the British Empire (mainly the United Kingdom and India) was organized and deployed to maintain a British rule of order extending from the rivers of China to the cane fields of Antigua. The most troublesome possessions, in this comprehensive catalogue of military interventions, were India and Palestine and their peripheries. Tropical Africa was overwhelming quiescent with policing and occasional punitive actions mainly left to local forces. Which was just as well for, as Dr. Clayton argues in his conclusion, a global presence did not mean global power. Yet the preservation of the Empire, although not with the clout of 1914, nevertheless had a vital diplomatic and strategic might when the U.K. again went to war in Europe in 1939.

Äthiopien—Unterentwicklung und radikale Militärherrschaft, by Stefan Brüne. Hamburg, Institut für Afrika-Kunde, 1986. viii + 373 pp. DM 38. ISBN 3 923519 63 X.

Brüne's study of twentieth century Ethiopia places the revolution and the emergence of the Derg in the context of the development of the modern Ethiopian state, and in the interests of newly emerging strata, economically dependent on the state, who needed both to overthrow the old order and convert the state to their own uses. He is able thus to account both for the radicalism of the new regime, and for its ruthless commitment to centralization. Less detailed in its treatment of day-to-day events than some studies that have already appeared in English (the text runs only to 173 pages, with 200 pages of documents and bibliography), it nonetheless provides a persuasively argued overview. It is, however, entirely in German, save for a very brief English summary.

Football in Nigeria, by S. E. Akpabot. Macmillan, London, 1985. vii + 104 pp. \$3.50 paperback. ISBN 0 333 37931 4.

This book briefly outlines the developments of soccer in Nigeria with a simplicity and innocence reminiscent of Charles Buchan's *Football Monthly*. The aura of the fifties is enhanced by numerous photographs of an early Nigerian tour of Britain featuring the game with Bishop Auckland (the home team won 5–2). For the most part this is a book for the *cognoscente* full of the exploits of 'Bulldozer' Amusa (a Nigerian Nat Lofthouse) and other similar 'Roy of the Rovers' characters. Others may care to note in passing the exploits of Nnamdi Azikiwe who in 1938 played on the left wing for ZAC (Zic's Athletic Club) which went on to field two teams called the Bombers and the Spitfires. Nigerian politicians have exploited football and tribalism has reared its head on the field of play—just like Britain!

Figuring African Trade. Proceedings of the symposium on the quantification and structure of the import and export and long distance trade in Africa 1800-1913, edited by G. Liesegang, H. Pasch, and A. Jones. Dietrich Reimer Vg., Berlin, 1986. xiii+685 pp. DM75.-paperback. ISBN 3 496 00815 6.

Twenty-one papers, grouped by geographical region, and arranged in six parts (Techniques of retrieving and storing trade figures; West African trade 1750-1850; Oil and rubber in West Africa; Imperialism and trade in Western Africa; From slaves to railways in Eastern Africa; and Quantifying production and trade in the interior of Africa), which indicate the need, and provide some of the structures and data, for the quantification of certain African trade goods in the nineteenth century.

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July–September 1986

by R. J. TOWNSEND

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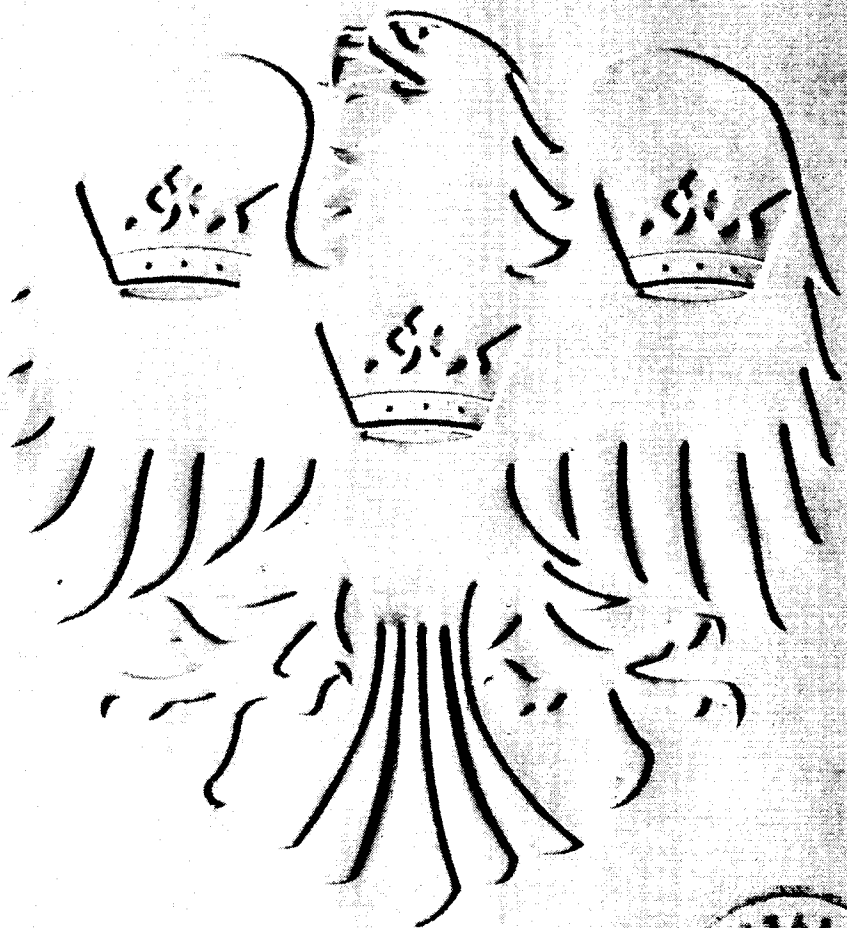
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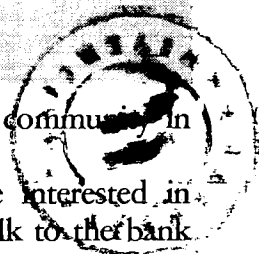
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